

**Position Statement  
on  
Formally Trained Dermatologists Are Better Qualified  
(Approved by the Board of Directors: March 7, 2016)**

Multiple groups are now claiming dermatology expertise including physicians who have been trained in other specialties and physicians who have not completed a formal dermatology residency or fellowship, as well as physician extenders, cosmetologists, and electrologists who are not medical doctors.

These individuals are able to advertise on the internet as being dermatology providers and confuse patients. State law and medical boards have difficulty staying ahead of such misleading advertising and there is evidence that less trained individuals injure patients more frequently, perform more unnecessary procedures, and order more unnecessary tests.

This is a burden on the health care system.

In response to insurers and agencies seeking approved quality indicators to increase the value of care paid for, the American Academy of Dermatology Board of Directors formally supports the concept that formal education of dermatologists (completed medical school, dermatology residency, boards, fellowships) should be considered a positive quality indicator.

*This Position Statement is provided for educational and informational purposes only. It is intended to offer physicians guiding principles and policies regarding the practice of dermatology. This Position Statement is not intended to establish a legal or medical standard of care. Physicians should use their personal and professional judgment in interpreting these guidelines and applying them to the particular circumstances of their individual practice arrangements.*