



Tomorrow's Doctors, Tomorrow's Cures®

Voters' Education Initiative: Engagement and Empowerment

(Adapted from 2024 IDEAS Webinar-June 18th, 2024)



Group on Women in Medicine and Science (GWIMS)

GWIMS Toolkit

Partnership for the Non-Partisan Initiative

- **AAMC GWIMS Voters' Education Initiative**

- Allison C. Augustus-Wallace, PhD, MS, MNS (Lead)
- Courtney Schreiber, MD, MPH (Co-Lead)
- Kimberly A. Bibb, MD
- John Cullen, PhD
- Tammy Knowling, PhD
- Ana Maria Lopez, MD, MPH
- Christina Mangurian, MD, MAS

- **AAMC Office of Government Relations**

- Erica Froyd, MPA, Senior Director, Advocacy and Engagement at Association of American Medical Colleges (**AAMC**)
- Ally Perleoni, Director, Government Relations at Association of American Medical Colleges (**AAMC**)

Contributors:

(AAMC GWIMS Toolkit and AAMC IDEAS Webinar)

Allison C. Augustus-Wallace, PhD, MS, MNS, DEIC

Associate Professor-Research

Director, Undergraduate Academic Pathway Programs for Diversity

Dept. of Medicine & Office of Diversity and Community Engagement

LSUHSC New Orleans, School of Medicine

Ally Perleoni, MA

Director of Government Relations

AAMC

Content

- I. Background: AAMC Fact Sheet for Nonpartisan Voter Registration at Health Care Institutions
- II. About the AAMC-Member Institutions
- III. Operationalization through Advocacy
- IV. Vot-ER Nonpartisan Organization: In Action (AAMC-Vot-ER Partnership/Additional operationalization)
- V. AAMC IDEAS Webinar Skit (Example: Potential Conversation)

I. Background: Fact Sheet for Nonpartisan Voter Registration at Health Care Institutions

Medical schools and teaching hospitals can support an inclusive democracy by encouraging civic engagement among students, staff, and patients. Nonpartisan voter registration is a simple yet effective way for these institutions to advance their commitment to health equity and is allowable under federal law.

The AAMC has developed this fact sheet in collaboration with Vot-ER, a nonpartisan organization that works to integrate voter education and registration into health care settings.
<https://www.aamc.org/advocacy-policy/voterregistration>.

Federal Law Allows Health Care Institutions to Engage in Nonpartisan Voter Registration Efforts

- **National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA):** The NVRA requires states to designate offices as voter registration agencies that provide registration opportunities to their constituents. Under the NVRA, hospitals and other health care institutions are allowed to facilitate nonpartisan voter registration activities and/or seek designation as voter registration agencies.

I. Background: Fact Sheet for Nonpartisan Voter Registration at Health Care Institutions (continued)

Recent Actions by Government Agencies Encourage Health Care and Educational Institutions to Participate in Nonpartisan Voter Registration Activities

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) March 2022

HRSA, the government agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that funds federally qualified health centers, released guidance encouraging these centers to “support non-partisan voter registration efforts as a means of reducing barriers to civic engagement within the communities they serve.” These voter registration efforts may include “making available voter registration materials to patients, encouraging patients to register to vote, assisting patients with completing registration forms, sending completed forms to the election authorities, providing voter registration materials in waiting rooms, and allowing private, non-partisan organizations to conduct on-site voter registration.”

I. Background: Fact Sheet for Nonpartisan Voter Registration at Health Care Institutions (continued)

Recent Actions by Government Agencies Encourage Health Care and Educational Institutions to Participate in Nonpartisan Voter Registration Activities

Department of Education (DOE) April 2022

The DOE sent a Dear Colleague letter to all university presidents emphasizing the requirement of higher education institutions administering federal student aid, including medical colleges, to provide voter registration materials to their communities. The letter encourages institutions to participate in the following activities:

- Distributing mail and/or electronic voter registration forms to students.
- Providing federal work study funds for nonpartisan voter registration efforts.
- Supporting students who are abroad to vote by mail.
- Encouraging faculty, staff, and students to volunteer to be an election poll worker.
- Registering the institution as a ballot drop box location, early voting site, and Election Day voting site.

I. Background: Fact Sheet for Nonpartisan Voter Registration at Health Care Institutions (continued)

Guidance For Voter Registration at Health Care Institutions

Allowed and encouraged activities:

- Asking students, staff, or patients if they would like to register to vote and point them to voter registration resources.
- Telling students, staff, or patients that the institution offers a service to help them register to vote but that it does not endorse any political party.
- Helping students, staff, or patients fill out voter registration forms while remaining neutral.
- Sending completed forms to the election authorities.

Activities to avoid in registering voters:

- Do not state or imply that voters should vote a particular way.
- Do not communicate party or candidate preferences.
- Do not mention policy positions or party platforms.

II. About the AAMC – Member Institutions



Medical Schools

158

LCME-accredited
US medical schools

13

LCME accredited
Canadian medical
schools



Teaching Hospitals

~400

Academic health systems and teaching
hospitals, including Veterans Affairs
medical centers



Academic and Professional Societies

More
than **70**

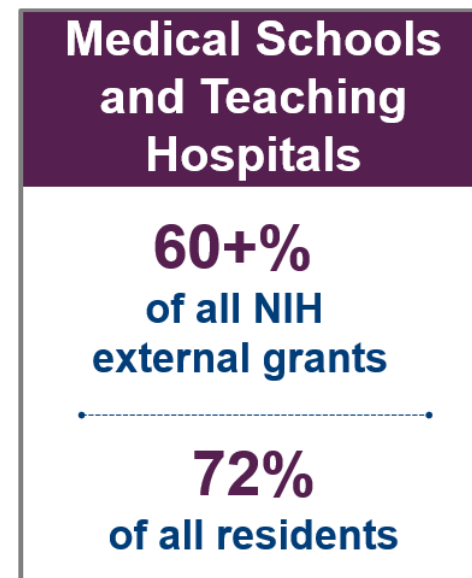
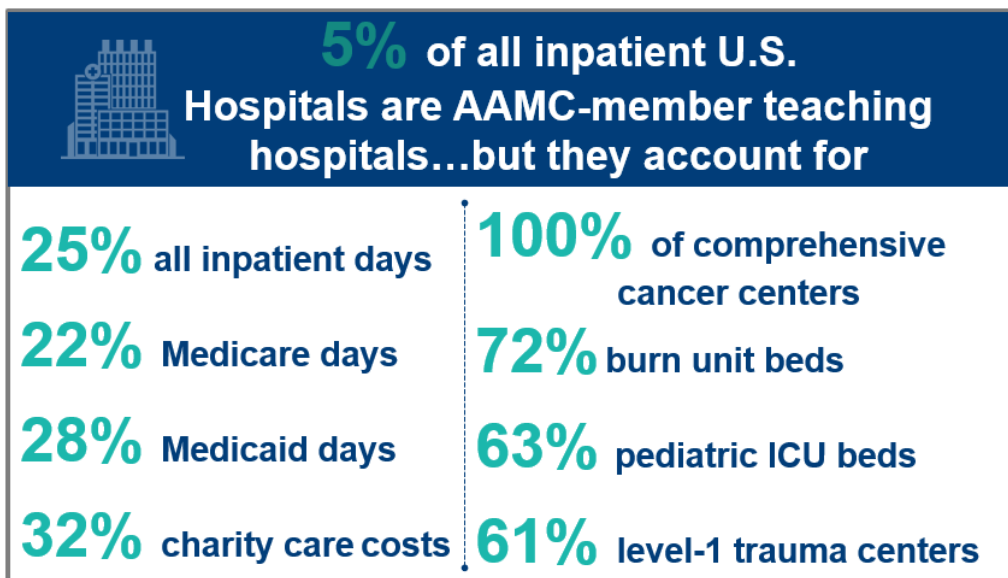
academic and professional
societies



AMC

II. About the AAMC-Member Institutions (continued)

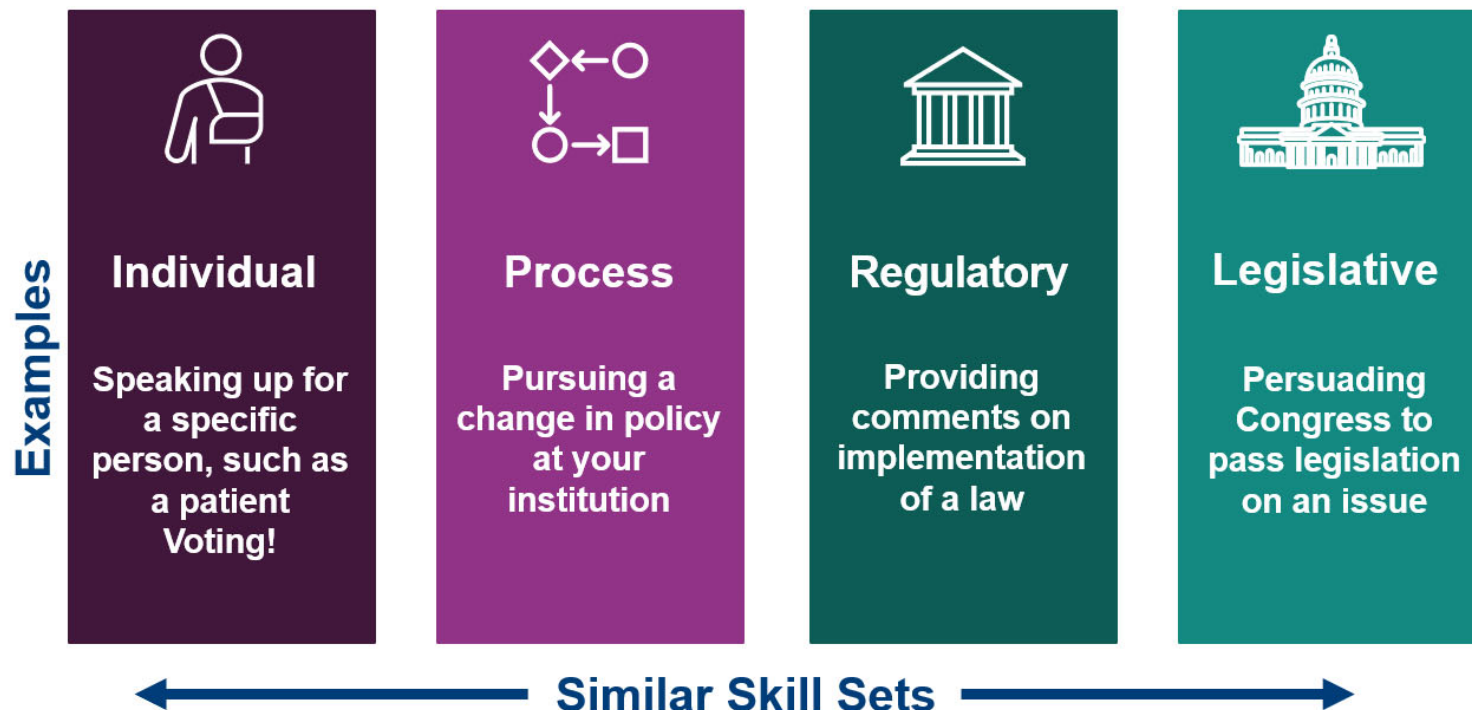
Academic Medicine: Disproportionate Provider of Patient Care, Research, and Training



Source: AAMC analysis of AHA Annual Survey Database FY2022 and NIH Extramural Research Award data.
Note: Data reflect all short-term, general, nonfederal hospitals.

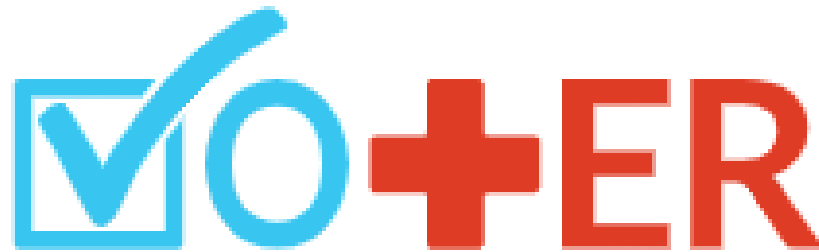
III. Operationalization through Advocacy

Many Different Forms of Advocacy



IV. Vot-ER Non-partisan Organization In Action

(AAMC-Vot-ER Partnership; Additional operationalization)

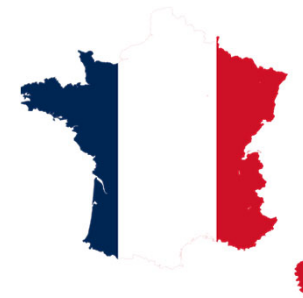


In Action

Unregistered voters in the United States



72 million =



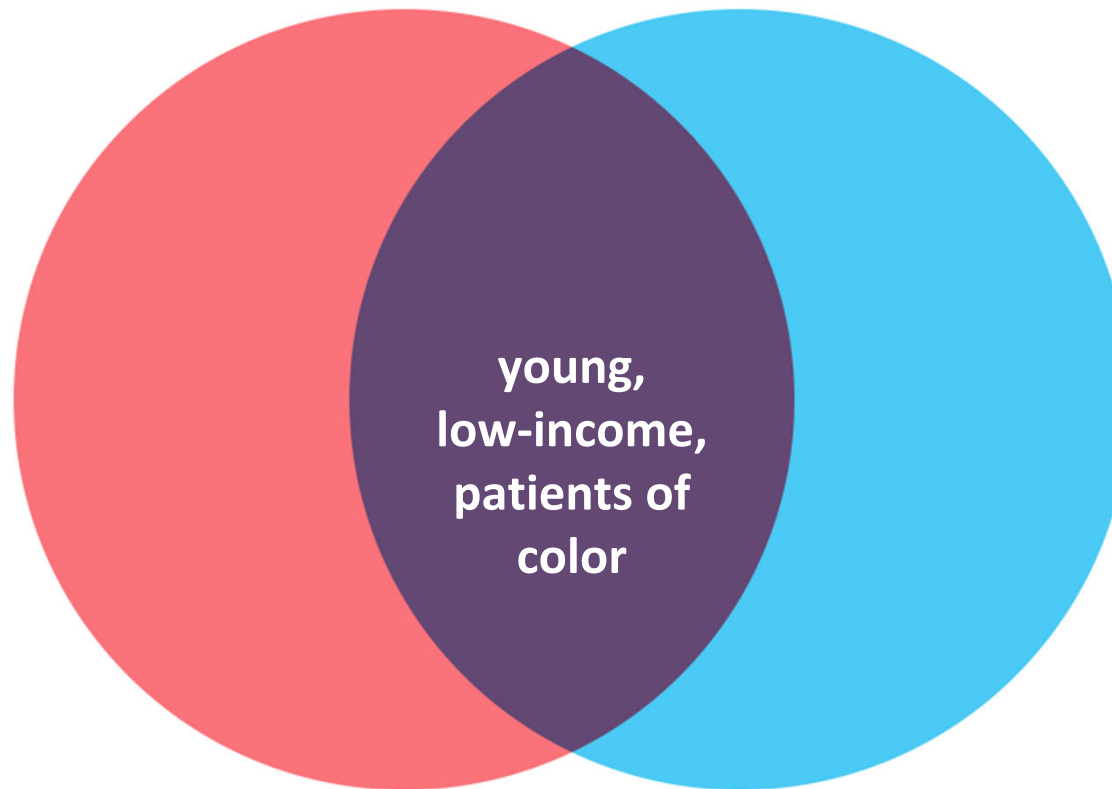
Unregistered voters in the United
States

Entire population of
France

Demographic Overlap



Unregistered
eligible voters



Patients most
marginalized by our
current health system



From 1996 to 2002,
eligible physicians
voted
approximately **9%**
less than the
general
population.

Surely we've fixed
this since then, right?

Do Doctors Vote?

David Grande, MD, MPA^{1,2}, David A. Asch, MD, MBA^{2,3,4}, and Katrina Armstrong, MD, MSCE^{2,4}

¹Robert Wood Johnson Health and Society Scholars Program, University of Pennsylvania, 3641 Locust Walk, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6218, USA; ²Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics, University of Pennsylvania, 3641 Locust Walk, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6218, USA; ³Center for Health Equity Research and Promotion, Philadelphia Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Philadelphia, USA; ⁴Division of General Internal Medicine, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, Philadelphia, USA.

BACKGROUND: Organizational leaders and scholars have issued calls for the medical profession to refocus its efforts on fulfilling the core tenets of professionalism. A key element of professionalism is participation in community affairs.

OBJECTIVE: To measure physician voting rates as an indicator of civic participation.

DESIGN: Cross-sectional survey of a subgroup of physicians from a nationally representative household survey of civilian, noninstitutionalized adult citizens.

PARTICIPANTS: A total of 350,870 participants in the Current Population Survey (CPS) November Voter Supplement from 1996–2002, including 1,274 physicians and 1,886 lawyers; 414,989 participants in the CPS survey from 1976–1982, including 2,033 health professionals.

MEASUREMENTS: Multivariate logistic regression models were used to compare adjusted physician voting rates in the 1996–2002 congressional and presidential elections with those of lawyers and the general population and to compare voting rates of health professionals in 1996–2002 with those in 1976–1992.

RESULTS: After multivariate adjustment for characteristics known to be associated with voting rates, physicians were less likely to vote than the general population in 1998 (odds ratio 0.76; 95% confidence interval [CI] 0.59–0.99), 2000 (odds ratio 0.64; 95% CI 0.44–0.93), and 2002 (odds ratio 0.60; 95% CI 0.40–0.89), but not


INTRODUCTION

Voting is the most basic expression of civic participation and community engagement in a democratic society. Many scholars have argued that doctors' professional standing elevates expectations for their civic participation. Recent trends including declining trust in medicine and increasing investor-ownership in the health care industry have renewed discussions about medical professionalism and its basic tenets, including duty to engage in advocacy and community affairs.^{1–5}

Medical organizations themselves have issued a series of proclamations and calls for a renewal of medical professionalism. In 2001, the *American Medical Association* issued its "Declaration of Professional Responsibility: Medicine's Social Contract with Humanity," which included a commitment to "advocate for social, economic, educational, and political changes that ameliorate suffering and contribute to human well-being."⁶ Their "Principles of Medical Ethics" include the statement that "a physician shall recognize a responsibility to participate in activities contributing to the improvement of the community..."⁷ More recently, the American Board of Internal Medicine Foundation in conjunction with its European counterpart published the "Charter on Medical Professionalism" with similar views.⁸

However, few studies have been conducted to assess physicians' civic behaviors and whether they meet these goals put forth by professional associations. Voting rates offer an imperfect but informative view of the civic behavior of populations. Voters are more likely to be interested

From 2006 to 2018,
eligible physicians
voted
approximately
14% less than the
general
population.



Research Letter

October 22, 2020

Trends in Physician Voting Practices in California, New York, and Texas, 2006-2018

Hussain S. Lalani, MD, MPH¹; David H. Johnson, MD¹; Ethan A. Halm, MD, MPH, MBA^{2,3}; et al

[> Author Affiliations](#) | [Article Information](#)

JAMA Intern Med. 2021;181(3):383-385. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2020.6887

From 1996 to 2002, eligible physicians voted approximately 9 percentage points less than the general population.¹ Since then, physician voter engagement has not been reported. We investigated physician voter participation, voter registration, and voter turnout from 2006 through 2018 in California, New York, and Texas, which are states with the largest number of physicians.

Methods

We merged the National Provider Identifier (NPI) registry with state voter files from L2, a nonpartisan political data corporation,² and identified physicians registered to vote in general elections by using a matching process based on names, NPI enumeration dates, dates of birth, and occupational data from commercial reports. We identified the number of active physicians using state workforce profiles from the Association of American Medical Colleges. We obtained general population voting data and determined eligibility using the Voting and Registration Supplement to the Current Population Survey³ by the US Census Bureau and Bureau of Justice Statistics.⁴

The primary outcome was voter participation (ie, the proportion of physicians who voted among

The American Medical Association recognizes this link ...



In June 2022, the American Medical Association formally recognized **voting as a social determinant of health**



**Voting as a
Social Determinant
of Health**

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION RESOLUTION 422

... as does the Association of American Medical Colleges



In August 2022,
the Association
of American
Medical Colleges
issued joint
guidance with
Vot-ER on
**medical school
and teaching
hospital support
for voter
registration**



Fact Sheet for Healthcare-Based Nonpartisan Voter Registration

Medical schools and teaching hospitals can support an inclusive democracy by encouraging civic engagement among students, staff, and patients. Nonpartisan voter registration is a simple yet effective way for these institutions to advance their commitment to health equity and is allowable under federal law.

Vot-ER Tools & Resources



Vot-ER badges



Posters



Healthy Democracy Campaign

Vot-ER tools are

- ✓ **undisruptive**
- ✓ **optional**
- ✓ **nonpartisan**



Civic Health Month



We also invite our partners into a national community of aligned organizations.

Civic Health Month is a month dedicated to focusing the nation's spotlight and media attention on patient and provider civic engagement.





Vot-ER “plays an important role in addressing the social determinants of health by meeting potential voters where they are and supporting them in becoming more civically engaged.”

Bill Ryan, VP of Government Relations

EINSTEIN MEDICAL CENTER



2 | Legal FAQs

Legal Guidelines from Nonprofit Vote



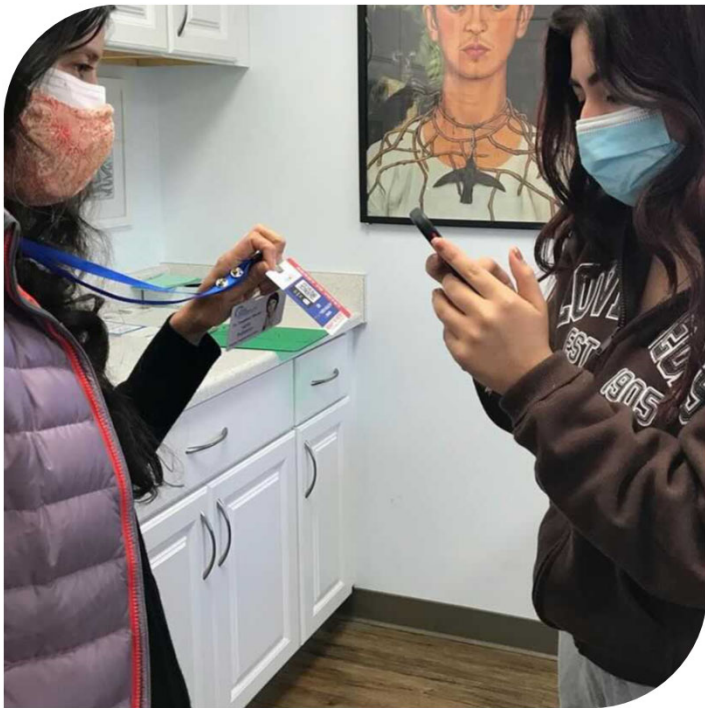
501(C)(3) organizations may conduct nonpartisan voter engagement activities designed to help the public participate in elections:

- voter registration
- voter education
- get-out-the-vote (GOTV)

The National Voter Registration Act of 1993 actually encourages this type of non-partisan voter registration in health centers!



Clinicians and healthcare organizations can...



- Point patients to Vot-ER posters, badges, or handouts
- Tell patients that their institution offers a service to help them register to vote, but they do not endorse any political party.
- Help a patient fill out the registration form while remaining neutral

Voter registration belongs in healthcare



Voter registration belongs in the hospital just as much as in the DMV.

Vot-ER ensures that healthcare workers remain **nonpartisan** and **confident** when helping patients.



3

Vot-ER across the US

Civic Health Month

Through Vot-ER's national program Civic Health Month, we partner with over 200 organizations and associations.



Why providers are excited about Vot-ER



45%

of respondents said their primary motivation for participating in the Healthy Democracy Campaign was to address “social and racial inequities.”

51%

they used their Vot-ER badge to improve the social determinants of health.

93%

of respondents said the Healthy Democracy Campaign represented “a positive, immediate impact I could have on my community and my community’s health.”

Why providers are excited about Vot-ER



79%

of respondents said
“Vot-ER “increased my
sense of connection to
other healthcare
providers.”

51%

of respondents said
“Vot-ER helped
prevent workplace
burnout.”

81%

of respondents
“Vot-ER made me
more hopeful in my
work.”

Why providers are excited about Vot-ER



I loved being able to witness the enthusiasm and camaraderie from both medical students and providers.



I am continually energized when talking to patients about this...It has been a great thing for my own mental health.

Emergency Doc in Ohio



You can act now



- Get your free **individual Vot-ER badge** at vot-er.org/free-badge
- Get **team badges** at vot-er.org/team-badges
- Join **Civic Health Month** at [civichealthmonth](https://civichealthmonth.org)

V. AAMC IDEAS Webinar Skit

(Example: Potential Conversation)

DR. AUGUSTUS-WALLACE: Okay, Ally well thanks for coming in, it's always nice to see you.

ALLY: Thank you, Dr. Augustus-Wallace. I'll be sure to follow the plan that we talked about.

DR. AUGUSTUS-WALLACE: That's great. Before you leave, I'd like to check and see if you're registered to vote this November.

ALLY: No, I'm not voting. I'm too busy and I think it's a waste of time.

DR. AUGUSTUS-WALLACE: Well, I'm sorry to hear that Ally. But voting is an incredibly powerful tool to address and improve issues you care about, like your health.

ALLY: I doubt that. Those guys in Washington don't care about me.

DR. AUGUSTUS-WALLACE: I can understand that concern, but there are so many elections that are decided by very few votes, especially in local elections that affect your day-to-day life. I encourage you to utilize your voice and advocate for your community.

ALLY: I don't like politics – are you trying to tell me HOW to vote?

DR. AUGUSTUS-WALLACE: Not at all. But I am encouraging you to get out there and vote. No matter your party or your politics, voting is so important because it's how we make decisions for the future. You're my student, and I want you to be empowered to participate in this important process.

ALLY: One vote can't make a difference.

V. AAMC IDEAS Webinar Skit

(Example: Potential Conversation-continued)

DR. AUGUSTUS-WALLACE: Your vote DOES make a difference! In fact, local elections are often decided by a small number of voters, and the impact on your community is immediate. Through your vote, you have a say on issues like prices of medication and the cost of health insurance that affect your friends and family.

ALLY: Wow really? I didn't realize that. It still seems like a lot of work – how do I register and where am I even supposed to vote?

DR. AUGUSTUS-WALLACE: To make sure you're ready to vote, all you have to do is point your camera at this QR code on my badge or text this number. The platform will help you get ready to vote by ordering an absentee ballot, looking up what's on your ballot, or finding your polling place, and there is a helpline that can answer questions you may have!

ALLY: Okay great! Well who do I vote for then?

DR. AUGUSTUS-WALLACE: I can't tell you that because it's a choice you have to make as a voter. However, I encourage you to do a little research on the candidates on your ballot and see who best aligns with your views.

ALLY: Okay great, I'll definitely take a look. Thanks!

DR. AUGUSTUS-WALLACE: You're very welcome!

Resources

- <https://vot-er.org/https://vot-er.org/>
- <https://vot-er.org/resources/>
- <https://www.aamc.org/advocacy-policy/voterregistration>
- <https://www.aamchealthjustice.org/news/polling/civic-engagement>
- <https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/health-equity/another-question-patients-are-you-registered-vote>
- <https://www.apha.org/what-is-public-health/vote-for-health#toolkit>
- <https://www.apha.org/what-is-public-health/vote-for-health>
- <https://www.ncjw.org/work/voter-engagement/>
- <https://www.healthyvoting.org/>
- <https://www.ideas@aamc.org>