

ACP Facts

Background

The American College of Physicians (ACP) is a national organization of internists – specialists who apply scientific knowledge and clinical expertise to the diagnosis, treatment, and compassionate care of adults across the spectrum from health to complex illness. Internists are major providers of primary care in the United States. They are especially well-trained in the diagnosis of puzzling medical problems, in the ongoing care of complicated illnesses, and in caring for patients with more than one disease. Internists not only treat disease but also coordinate health care and play a critical role in preventing disease and promoting health and well-being.

Internists and Subspecialists

An M.D. or D.O. who completes a three-year internal medicine residency program is an internist. The *general internist* is an expert in the general care of the adult but also may have special areas of expertise. A *subspecialty internist* is an internist with one to three years of additional training in a particular organ (nephrology/kidney), system (endocrinology/glands), or age group (geriatrics). Some internists practice a combination of both general and subspecialty medicine.

Mission and History

The ACP mission is to enhance the quality and effectiveness of health care by fostering excellence and professionalism in the practice of medicine. ACP was founded in 1915 to promote the science and practice of medicine. In 1998, ACP merged with the American Society of Internal Medicine (ASIM), which was established in 1956 to study economic aspects of medicine.

Membership

With 143,000 members, ACP is the largest medical specialty organization and second-largest physician group in the United States. ACP provides information and advocacy for its members as they practice internal medicine and related subspecialties such as cardiology and gastroenterology. ACP members are also involved in medical education, research, and administration.

Levels of ACP membership are **Medical Student**, **Associate**, **Member**, **Fellow** (FACP), **Honorary Fellow**, and **Master** (MACP). Fellowship and Mastership recognize achievements in internal medicine. Masters are selected for outstanding contributions to medicine.

ACP Publications

Annals of Internal Medicine, published weekly online is one of the top medical journals in the world. *ACP JournalWise* summarizes the most important medical articles from more than 120 journals. *ACP Internist* is an award-winning semi-monthly newspaper for internists, while *ACP Hospitalist* is written for those in hospital practice.

Activities

The ACP Washington, D.C., office monitors and responds to policy issues that affect public health and the practice of medicine. Activities include development of policy statements and communication with legislative and administrative sectors of government.

The **Center for Ethics and Professionalism** seeks to advance physician and public understanding of ethics and professionalism issues in the practice of medicine in order to enhance patient care by promoting the highest ethical standards.

Education and Information Resources

ACP supports the optimal practice of medicine by providing opportunities for continuing medical education. ACP medical education programs include the development of evidence-based clinical practice guidelines. ACP's annual scientific meeting, **Internal Medicine 2016** will be held May 5-7 in Washington, D.C.

ACP's **Medical Knowledge Self-Assessment Program (MKSAP)** gives internists an opportunity to test their knowledge and compare their results with national averages. In addition, ACP offers postgraduate board review courses, recertification courses, and chapter/regional meetings. For future internists, ACP provides education and career information, produces, and administers an In-Training Examination for residents.

ACP's **Practice Support** area, offers practice-support tools to enhance the efficiency, quality, and delivery of care, including a Physician & Practice Timeline which helps physicians stay on top of important dates and track deadlines for a variety of regulatory, payment, educational, and delivery system changes and requirements.

ACP works with internists and health literacy and communication experts, through the **Center for Patient Partnership in Healthcare**, to create innovative health information tools to help patients better understand and manage their health. Resources include patient education brochures and DVDs for physicians who wish to raise awareness and educate their patients and communities.

Structure

ACP is governed by an elected Board of Regents. The Board is advised by a network of ACP committees and by the ACP Board of Governors, which is composed of elected Governors in chapters and regions of the United States, Bangladesh, Canada, Central and South America, India, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Southeast Asia (which includes: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand) and the Gulf chapter (which includes Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates). The ACP Caribbean chapter will be official in July 2016. ACP sponsors the Council of Subspecialty Societies, which represents 25 subspecialty societies and internal medicine organizations. ACP is represented in the American Medical Association, the Council of Medical Specialty Societies, and other organizations.

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** to take office as 2016-2017 President and Chair, Board of Regents, May 7, 2016.*