

Summary of ACP's Leadership Day Priorities May 17-18, 2022

Access to Care

Congress should pass legislation below to expand access to health coverage and make it more affordable by supporting policies that would continue expanded eligibility for higher premium tax credits (as enacted in the American Rescue Plan Act) to purchase coverage through the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and provide higher federal payments for states to expand their Medicaid population beyond CY2022.

- ✓ **Cosponsor and pass H.R. 340, the *Incentivizing Medicaid Expansion Act of 2021***, to expand federal matching assistance for states that choose to expand Medicaid, regardless of when such expansion takes place. Introduce and pass the companion bill in the Senate.
- ✓ **Cosponsor and pass H.R. 369, the *Health Care Affordability Act of 2021***, to permanently expand eligibility for higher premium tax credits under the ACA. Introduce and pass the companion bill in the Senate.

Physician Payment

Congress should pass legislation and support policies to stabilize and improve payments for undervalued office-based visits under Medicare, provide sufficient funding to prevent scheduled and future cuts in payments, and ensure positive annual updates under Medicare's physician fee schedule.

- ✓ **Support inclusion in must-pass legislation this year provisions to provide financial stability through a baseline positive annual update to the physician fee schedule reflecting inflation in practice costs, and eliminate, replace or revise budget neutrality requirements to allow for appropriate changes in spending growth. Extend the moratoriums on sequester and PAYGO cuts that were approved by Congress at the end of last year.**

Mental and Behavioral Health

Congress should pass legislation below and support policies to address the mental and behavioral health crisis among clinicians and patients, including improving the integration of such services into the primary care setting.

- ✓ **Cosponsor and pass H.R. 5218, the *Collaborate in an Orderly and Cohesive Manner Act***, to provide grants through the Department of Health and Human Services to primary care physicians who choose to deliver behavioral health care through the Collaborate Care Model (CoCM). Introduce and pass the companion bill in the Senate.
- ✓ **Support enhanced reimbursement for CoCM payment codes under Medicare to more appropriately reflect the value of services provided to patients with mental health and substance use disorder needs.**

Prescription Drug Reform

Congress should pass legislation below to improve access to prescription drugs by reducing excessive prescription drugs costs through pricing transparency, providing authority to the federal government to negotiate prescription drug prices under the Medicare Part D program, and removing harmful step therapy protocols.

- ✓ **Cosponsor and pass S. 898, the *Fair Drug Pricing Act***, to require drug companies to disclose and provide more information about imminent drug-price increases, including data about research and development costs. Introduce and pass the companion bill in the House.

- ✓ **Cosponsor and pass S. 833, the *Empowering Medicare Seniors to Negotiate Drug Prices Act of 2021***, to help to reduce drug prices and out-of-pocket costs by allowing the federal government to negotiate lower drug prices on behalf of Medicare beneficiaries. Introduce and pass the companion bill in the House.
- ✓ **Cosponsor and pass S. 464/H.R. 2163, the *Safe Step Act***, to ensure patient access to appropriate treatments based on clinical decision-making and medical necessity rather than arbitrary step therapy protocols.

Primary Care and the Physician Workforce

Congress should pass legislation below and support policies to ensure an adequate supply of internal medicine specialists trained in primary and comprehensive care that includes increasing Graduate Medical Education (GME) positions, addressing medical education debt, decreasing barriers to increase the number of international physicians in the U.S., and funding Title VII Health Professions grants.

- ✓ **Cosponsor and pass H.R. 2256/S. 834, the *Resident Physician Reduction Shortage Act of 2021***, to increase the number of GME slots to 14,000 over seven years for specialties facing shortages, including internal medicine.
- ✓ **Cosponsor and pass S. 1024, the *Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act***, to recapture 40,000 unused visas and use them to provide additional green cards to 15,000 physicians and 25,000 professional nurses. Introduce and pass the companion bill in the House.
- ✓ **Cosponsor and pass H.R. 3541/S. 1810, the *Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Reauthorization Act***, to allow states to sponsor foreign-trained physicians to work in medically underserved areas in exchange for a waiver of the physicians' two-year foreign residence requirement.
- ✓ **Cosponsor and pass H.R. 4122/S. 3658, the *Resident Education Deferred Interest (REDI) Act***, to make it possible for residents to defer interest on their loans.
- ✓ **Support inclusion in FY2023 appropriations legislation funding for Title VII Primary Care and Training Enhancement (PCTE)** at \$71 million to support and expand the pipeline for individuals training in primary care.

Public Health and Pandemic Preparedness

Congress should pass legislation below and support policies designed to protect public health and research, fund pandemic preparedness programs and initiatives, and increase the flexibility and use of telehealth services as needed during and beyond the public health emergency.

- ✓ **Support funding in FY2023 appropriations** - \$11 billion total for the CDC, \$35 million for the CDC's Injury Prevention and Control, Firearm Injury and Mortality Prevention Research; \$49 billion in total for the NIH, \$25 million for the Office of the Director, Firearm Injury and Mortality Prevention Research.
- ✓ **Cosponsor and pass the *COVID Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022, H.R. 7007***, or a similar supplemental funding package, to provide \$15.6 billion in additional funding for COVID relief.
- ✓ **Cosponsor and pass the *CONNECT for Health Act (H.R. 2903/S. 1512)* and the *Telehealth Extension Act of 2021 (H.R. 6202/S. 3593)***, to remove arbitrary restrictions on where a patient must be located to utilize telehealth services; enable patients to continue to receive telehealth services in their homes; ensure federally-qualified health centers and rural health centers can furnish telehealth services and improve data collection and analysis for at least two years.

Details on these policy priorities can be found at: [Policy Priority Issues](#) | [ACP Services](#)