

American College of Preventive Medicine

Policy Committee Report October 2006

Chair: Mark Johnson
Vice Chair: Chris Armstrong

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Since reporting to the Board in February 2006, the ACPM Policy Committee and policy staff have focused on: (1) aggressively pursuing a legislative initiative to increase federal support for preventive medicine residency programs, (2) activating the ACPM grassroots advocacy web site, (3) providing testimony to the IOM Committee on Training Physicians for Careers in Public Health; and, (4) reviewing AMA resolutions for the Annual and Interim AMA House of Delegates '06 meetings.

Advocacy for Preventive Medicine Residency Training

In keeping with the ACPM strategic plan goal to strengthen funding for preventive medicine residency (PMR) training programs ACPM staff continue to pursue a targeted advocacy campaign aimed at advancing our legislative priority through the Congress. ACPM's focus has been on developing a long-range legislative strategy to establish a line-item in the federal discretionary budget devoted to PMR training. Since the February meeting, ACPM has built support for making the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) the administrative and funding home of a dedicated line-item appropriation for all PMR training programs. The College has also secured the support of key Senators who are positioned to play an influential role as the ACPM initiative begins to move through the legislative process.

Sen. Richard Burr (R-NC), as chair of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Subcommittee on Bioterrorism and Public Health Preparedness, has jurisdiction over our issue and has agreed to support our proposal in the Senate. Sen. Burr represents UNC and Duke University, both of which have preventive medicine residency training programs in need of increased federal support. Sen. Johnny Isakson (R-GA), also a member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, is well positioned to advocate for a dedicated funding stream for preventive medicine residency training as Georgia is home to the CDC. Two residency training programs in need of additional support, the Morehouse School of Medicine and Emory University, also are located in Sen. Isakson's state.

Both Senators are presently exploring opportunities to include an initial FY 2007 line-item appropriation of \$10 million for all PMR training programs. In order to secure such an appropriation this late in the year the College is working to secure the full support of Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA) who, as chair of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, has jurisdiction over numerous health programs including the CDC budget.

Those Senators are joined by a growing group of other Senators, such as Sens. Tom Harkin (D-IA), Barbara Boxer (D-CA), and Ken Salazar (D-CO) who have pledged to support ACPM's initiative.

These important activities have benefited greatly by the personal involvement of several ACPM members including members of the North Carolina Academy of Preventive Medicine, Leila Kahwati, Ron Levine, Deborah Porterfield, Elizabeth Tilson and Joyce Young. ACPM General Preventive Medicine Regent Dan Blumenthal, chair of the preventive medicine department at Morehouse, has invested a great deal of time in meeting directly with Sen. Isakson and following up with the Senator and his staff by phone to secure his full support and involvement.

In concert with the line-item strategy the College continues to advocate for funding under HRSA's Title VII health professions education programs. The proposed FY 2007 Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill reinstates the Title VII PMR training funds that were eliminated in the Administration's budget request and subsequently by the U.S. House of Representatives. The Senate flat funded FY 2007 Title VII PMR funding at last year's level of \$1.2 million. ACPM has begun its advocacy for Title VII funding for FY 2008, working with several health coalitions to advocate for the highest possible allocation in the Budget Resolution. Several PMR program directors who benefit from Title VII funding will be meeting with the Chief of the Public Health Branch at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on Oct. 5 to advocate for continued funding.

Another policy activity of note was the recent introduction of the "Preventive Medicine for a Healthier America Act of 2006," H.R. 5657, by Rep. Joseph Knollenberg (R-MI). Rep. Knollenberg's bill is a product of discussions with ACPM representatives and staff and signals a growing interest among employers to engage their workers in health promotion activities as a means of reducing health care costs and increasing worker productivity. The legislation provides employers with a \$200.00 tax credit per employee enrolled in a wellness program approved by a board-certified preventive medicine physician. The wellness program must provide at least two preventive health screenings targeting two of the following: smoking, obesity, stress management, physical fitness, nutrition, substance abuse, depression, mental health, heart disease, or maternal and infant health.

In addition to expanding the availability of wellness programs, H.R. 5657 also includes a payment assistance provision, which provides an opportunity for preventive medicine residents to apply for up to \$20,000 in medical school debt forgiveness upon the successful completion of their board-certification exam.

Activation of ACPM's Grassroots Advocacy Website

In order to generate grassroots support for ACPM's overall legislative agenda the College has invested in software that provides ACPM members with direct access to congressional offices through the ACPM web site. Since the February meeting, the ACPM has sent out three grassroots alerts that generated over 350 emails to Congress. The emails were sent in support of Title VII funding for PMR training, the Knollenberg bill, and inclusion of PMR training funds in

legislation introduced by Sen. Richard Burr, the “Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act.”

ACPM’s Legislative Action Alert Center can be viewed at, www.acpm.org/policy.htm

IOM Study on Public Health Workforce

Last year the ACPM learned that Congress, in response to a targeted ACPM advocacy effort, directed the Institute of Medicine (IOM) to conduct a workforce study to determine what knowledge and skills are needed by public health physicians; what type of training programs would prepare physicians for public health careers; how many training programs are needed to maintain an adequate public health physician workforce; and how these training programs should be funded. Bob Wallace, an ACPM nominee, was selected to serve on the IOM committee.

Two committee meetings have been held to date with the third scheduled for Oct. 5. ACPM has played a prominent role in the first two hearings as George Anderson, past-President of the College, provided poignant testimony at the April 27 inaugural meeting of the committee followed by a presentation by Hugh Tilson at the second committee meeting predicting a bright future for the preventive medicine specialty. On Oct. 5, Mike Parkinson, ACPM President-Elect, will testify on behalf of ACPM and will unveil ACPM’s model to estimate the number of preventive medicine physicians needed in various sectors of the healthcare system. The model is being developed under the guidance of an expert advisory committee which met several times throughout the summer to guide the model’s development. While the model is not a large funded study it represents ACPM’s best analysis based on the information and data currently available.

ACPM AMA Resolutions

The committee is currently considering three resolutions for introduction at the AMA House of Delegates (HoD) interim meeting in November. One resolution calls on the AMA to only meet in smoke-free cities and a second asks that the AMA encourage health care organizations to require flu vaccinations for all employees with direct patient care responsibilities. The third resolution calls on the AMA to advocate for reducing the trans-fat content of Americans’ diet. These resolutions currently are under review by the Policy Committee and were not ready for the Board’s review at the time this report was submitted. They will be provided to the Board electronically in advance of the October 5 meeting.

2006 PMR Directors Survey

In August, the College disseminated the ACPM PMR director’s survey to all program directors. This year’s survey included three new questions intended to capture data on the program costs of training individual residents. This new data will be incorporated into the ACPM future workforce model to be presented to the IOM and will enhance the College’s advocacy tools aimed at securing a dedicated funding stream for all PMR training programs.

Continuing / New Business

- See Attachment A for the ACPM policy compendium since the February Board meeting.

Attachment A

ACPM's policy compendium, February 2006 – October 2006

YEAR	NUMBER	TYPE	TITLE	SOURCE	EFFECTIVE
2006	009	H	Sign on letter to Sens. Specter and Harkin in support of increased funding for National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities at CDC	March of Dimes	4/25/2006
2006	010	H	Sign on letter to Sen. Obama and Rep. Solis in support of "Healthy Places Act of 2006"	American Public Health Assoc	5/1/2006
2006	011	H	Sign on letter to congressional leadership in support of increased appropriations for the FY 2007 Labor/HHS/Ed bill	Coalition for Health Funding	5/8/2006
2006	012	H	Sign on letter to FTC Chairman re: information requests to manufacturers of alcoholic beverages	Center for Science in the Public Interest	5/8/2006
2006	013	H	Sign on letter to Speaker Hastert urging support for adoption of Senate passed funding level for FY 2007 Labor/HHS/Ed funding bill	Coalition for Health Funding	5/8/2006
2006	014	H	Sign on letter to HHS Office of Global Health Affairs in support of proposed resolution on International Trade and Health (E.B. 0117.R5)	Center for Policy Analysis on Trade and Health	5/17/2006
2006	015	H	Sign on letter to Sen. Specter in support of increased funding for the CDC FY 2007 budget	American Public Health Assoc	5/19/2006
2006	016	H	Sign on letter to Rep. Lewis in support of increased funding for the CDC FY 2007 budget	Campaign for Public Health	5/23/2006
2006	017	H	Sign on letter to Sens. Specter and Harkin in support of increased funding for Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality	Friends of AHRQ	6/6/2006
2006	018	H	Sign on letter to Rep. Regula in support of increased funding for HRSA Health Professions Programs	Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition	6/6/2006
2006	019	H	Sign on letter to CMS Administrator Scott McClellan regarding coverage and payment for shingles vaccine	American Medical Association	6/29/2006
2006	020	H	Sign on letter to Congress rejecting budget process reform measures	Coalition for Health Funding	9/11/2006
2006	021	H	ACPM Comments to AAMC Title VII Reauthorization Committee Sign on letter to Senate Appropriators in support of Health professions funding	American Dental Education Assoc	7/17/2006
2006	022	H	Sign on letter to Senate L-HHS Committee in support of CDC environmental health and injury prevention programs	American Public Health Assoc	7/10/2006

A = Practice Policy Statements; B = Public Policy Statements; C = ACPM Resolutions; D = AMA Resolutions; E = Coalition/Joint Statements; F = Position Statements; G = Written Comments; H = Endorsements and Sign-On Letters; I = Congressional Letters and Statements; J = Testimony and Quotations; K = Patient Education Statements; X = Internal

