

American College of Physicians

Desired Future

April 2009

ACP's Vision

“To be the recognized leader in quality patient care, advocacy, education and enhancing career satisfaction for internal medicine and its subspecialties.”

While ACP must focus on the present to complete the daily activities that advance its mission, it must also look to the future for direction and inspiration to guide strategic thinking and decision making. The Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) with input from the Board of Regents (BOR) has identified four overarching areas of focus that define the long-term vision for the College:

- Delivery of Quality Patient Care
- Reform of the U.S. Healthcare Delivery System
- Excellence in Education
- ACP: Leader and Unifier of the Internal Medicine Community

Within each of these areas, ACP envisions a future state that focuses our long-term planning and inspires our current strategies. Together, these strategic statements describe a desired future for healthcare in the U.S. and for ACP.

Delivery of Quality Patient Care

- Patient-centered care is directed by a personal physician, comprehensive in scope, coordinated over time and place and accessible to all.
- Effective partnerships with patients promote shared responsibility and decision making.
- A coherent definition of quality of care, accompanied by appropriate resources allocated in the delivery system, together enable continuous practice improvement and practice which is evidence-based, measurable, transparent, accountable, practical and efficiently-designed.
- Health care systems (a) enable safe, seamless physician-to-physician transitions of care in outpatient and inpatient settings; (b) include provision of preventive services, diagnosis and treatment of acute and chronic illness, and assistance with end-of-life issues; and (c) foster team-based care that is led by a personal physician who provides continuous and coordinated care throughout a patient's lifetime; (d) reduce health care disparities.
- Disparities in patient health are addressed by providing equitable, appropriate care for all.

Reform of the U.S. Healthcare Delivery System

- The U.S. health care delivery system provides access, best quality care and health insurance coverage for 100% of our citizens.
- The U.S. health care system recognizes the value of systems and quality-driven, continuous and coordinated care delivered collaboratively in a team-based environment, provides appropriate payment for services that enhance the health of the patient and society, and is fully prepared to deal with national, regional, and local health emergencies.
- The physician payment system places equitable value on primary and principal care, including cognitive and procedural services, coordinated continuity of care, time with the patient, and quality of outcomes.

- A numerically appropriate and diverse physician workforce provides culturally competent care for the full breadth of racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups of Americans.
- Widespread use of interconnected health information technology achieves the best possible cost-effective, evidence-based, patient-centered care, and facilitates better epidemiological and outcomes research while protecting patients' privacy.

Excellence in Education

- The number of medical students and internal medicine training slots is sufficient to provide a strong, appropriately trained internal medicine workforce that meets the needs of a population with changing demographics.
- The medical training environment emphasizes the satisfaction of collaborative care of patients over time.
- The maintenance of certification process maximizes value for the individual physician, focuses on quality of care, and ensures that the core of internal medicine is common to all internists.
- ACP is the leading educational source for specialists in all fields of internal medicine and adheres to the concept that physicians should be lifelong learners. The College embraces new learning modalities and creates new resources to facilitate learning at the local level. Learning, including Maintenance of Certification, continues to have face-to-face interpersonal components.
- Physician trainees come from diverse backgrounds and represent the diversity of the American population.
- Continuous access to quality improvement at the point of care and convenient opportunities for learning increases the quality of care for all.
- The critical role of teachers is recognized and rewarded, their professional development is appropriately supported, and their numbers are sufficient to train the internal medicine workforce.

ACP: Leader and Unifier of the Internal Medicine Community

- The profession of internal medicine is characterized by a stable, definable career path; the provision of high-quality care; fair and equitable income levels; and reasonable work hours that offer balance in the physician's life.
- ACP's educational, membership, and public policy products attract an expanded membership of physicians who are considered the principal providers of care for adults with chronic, complex illness. Internal medicine-trained physicians in the U.S. and other countries view ACP as an essential professional membership organization.
- ACP sets the standards for excellence in ethical behavior and professionalism and fosters their growth and application in all stages of physicians' careers.
- ACP's inclusive policies lead to representation of the majority of physicians in all segments of internal medicine participating as members, and reflect the international and domestic demographic diversity in the field, which encompasses and honors the unique contributions of all.
- ACP programs, products, and services (PPS) serve all members including medical students, residents, fellows, general internists, subspecialists, hospitalists, and retirees. PPSs address quality in health care and patient safety and important professional needs including the humanities as they interface with medicine. Some PPSs are business related and involve strategic partnerships. PPSs generate revenue, provide financial stability to ACP, help to unify internal medicine and its subspecialties, have global appeal, and support the delivery of patient-centered care.

- Through ACP's continued efforts to understand the unique issues, concerns and priorities of internal medicine subspecialties, reform Graduate Medical Education (GME), and address disparities in the U.S. health care reimbursement system, the relationship between general internists, hospitalists, and internal medicine subspecialists is clearly defined and the "house" of Internal Medicine is unified, based upon common goals and aspirations, shared obligations to the greater community, and an understanding of the continuum of medical education and maintenance of competence.
- ACP is financially strong and a prudent steward of members' resources, including having sufficient operating revenue and reserves to meet the needs for future innovation and growth.