

Other Areas

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A Report from America's Internists on the State of the Nation's Health Care

*A System in Need of Change:
Restructuring Federal Health Care Policy to
Make Patient-Centered Care Available to All*

*The American College of Physicians
January 22, 2007*

Introduction

On behalf of its 120,000 internal medicine physician and medical student members, the American College of Physicians today is releasing sweeping new policy recommendations to reform Medicare, Medicaid, S-CHIP and other programs supported by the federal government to advance patient-centered primary care, a model of health-care delivery that has been proven to result in better quality, more efficient use of resources, reduced utilization, and higher patient satisfaction.

Patient-centered primary care will:

- Facilitate the ability of physicians, working in partnership with their patients, to implement a systems-based approach to delivering patient-centered services that have been shown to result in better quality, lower costs, and higher patient satisfaction.
- Avert an impending collapse of primary care medicine by restructuring payment policies to support the value of care provided by a primary care physician.
- Extend the benefits of a patient-centered health care system to all Americans, by taking immediate steps toward making affordable coverage available to the currently uninsured and by giving them direct access to patient-centered health care through a medical home.

Our specific and detailed recommendations on revamping federal reimbursement policies are presented in a companion position paper, "A System in Need of Change: Restructuring Payment Policies to Support Patient-Centered Care" also being released today.

ACP's recommendations acknowledge that the State of America's health care in 2007 is inadequate and that comprehensive reforms are needed in how medical care is organized, valued, financed and reimbursed.

In what ways is America's health care system inadequate?

- According to the most recent estimates by the U.S. Census, almost 47 million Americans do not have health insurance coverage.¹ The U.S. is the only major

¹ U.S. Census Bureau. Health Insurance Coverage 2005. Accessed at <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/hlthins/hlthin05/hlthin05asc.html>

