



Dear Colleagues,

In this, my first newsletter as your new Alaska Chapter ACP Governor, I want to introduce myself, spotlight some of the exciting news happening in Internal Medicine in our State, and invite you to renew your engagement with the American College of Physicians.

I came to Alaska in 1994 on a medical student rotation at Kanakanak Hospital in Dillingham, where I learned to filet Kings, provide veterinary care to the local dog population, and manage everything from GI bleeds to pregnancy to airway trauma. I returned to school at UCSF inspired by the Alaskan experience, and joined Peninsula Internal Medicine in Soldotna after finishing residency at the University of Washington. I first got involved with ACP when a former Governor, Rich Neubauer, invited me to the annual meeting - then held in a hospital basement. I was inspired by the quality of the scientific talks and by the welcome from experienced physicians from around the state. ACP has continued to be a nurturing professional home for me as I have taken on additional roles in teaching, leadership, sleep medicine, gender affirming care, and advocacy. ACP has a host of resources at the national level to help chapters achieve their goals - I hope to highlight some here and am happy to field individual questions.

One of the Alaska Chapter's long-term goals has been to support development of an Internal Medicine Residency in Alaska. It is my great pleasure to announce that this has finally come to pass through the efforts of many ACP members and others. Dr Gail Pokorney has more to say about this - below.

In these times of turmoil in health care, when expert panels are disbanded, and scientific consensus is upended, it can be overwhelming and discouraging. If you are interested in advocacy, please consider joining our Chapter's Health and Public Policy

Committee. Through attendance at Leadership Day, we encourage our congressional delegation to support policies that improve Alaskans' health - like supporting Medicaid and establishing sustainable funding for Medicare and supporting graduate medical education. ACP has position papers about many of the major health challenges we face. You can learn more about the College's positions and join the Advocates for Internal Medicine Network (AIMn) which makes it easy to send messages about key issues to your legislators at the [ACP Legislative Action Center](#).

In a push to expand our Chapter's support for members beyond scientific rigor, we have joined a narrative medicine challenge with other ACP chapters across the country. July is Alaska's month - you can [interact with any of the previous posts throughout July](#). I'd love to see some of you interacting with our IG or Facebook sites with your stories and responses.

When I am not seeing patients or working on advocacy, I try to get outside to play with my two rescue dogs, read a good book, or cook something new. Luna and Adélie and I hiked to Gull Rock outside of Hope, I am reading Joan Didion's Memoirs, including The Year of Magical Thinking, Blue Nights, and Notes to John, and I whipped up some spicy garlicky fuul, with fava beans from Rancho Gordo. I'd love to hear what you are up to - [join me at the annual meeting](#) - now in the fall season - September 26 and 27, 2025.

Kristin Mitchell, MD, FACP
Governor, Alaska Chapter of the American College of Physicians



Residents Arrive in Soldotna to Begin Rural Training in Alaska's First Internal Medicine Residency Program!

Central Peninsula Hospital (CPH) proudly welcomes the inaugural class of the University of Washington Alaska Internal Medicine Rural Residency Program (UW AIM-RRP) to Soldotna this month, marking the official start of the Alaska-based portion of their training. This milestone reflects a decade of effort from Alaska's IM physicians, healthcare organizations, community stakeholders, and UW collaborators to develop and implement a graduate medical education (GME) program that will help address the state's IM physician workforce shortage.

The two residents—selected for their interest in rural health and dedication to community-focused care—just finished a rigorous internship at the UW hospitals in Seattle and will spend the next two years training in primarily rural locations across Alaska. Based at CPH in Soldotna, they will have an intensive outpatient experience designed to prepare them for practice as primary care internists ("complexivists") in areas where subspecialty services are scarce. In addition to clinical rotations, they will

engage in didactic curricula, quality improvement initiatives, and cross-disciplinary training opportunities to prepare for the challenges (and rewards!) of rural and remote practice.

"This is an exciting moment for Alaska GME," said Dr. Gail Pokorney, Program Director for the UW AIM-RRP. "These physicians are not just here to train—they're here to become a part of our community. Their presence in our state represents real progress towards building a stronger, more resilient rural healthcare system in Alaska."

Please join us in welcoming our newest IM colleagues and plan to meet them in person in September!

Gail Pokorney, MD, FACP
Program Director, UW AK IM Rural Residency

Join Us for a Reimagined Chapter Meeting!



We're excited to invite you to the Alaska Chapter ACP Internal Medicine Meeting!

Date: September 26–27, 2025

Location: Marriott Anchorage Downtown 820 West 7th Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99501

This year's meeting features a fresh format—now condensed into two days—with engaging educational sessions and a Friday family-friendly event.

A special room block has been secured for attendees and exhibitors at a rate of \$399 per night, available through [this link](#). Be sure to book by September 15, 2025, to take advantage of the discounted rate.

[Register Today!](#)



ACPSM

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Alaska ACP Narrative Medicine Challenge

We invite you to our Narrative Medicine Social Media
Challenge, an opportunity to start a practice in Narrative
Medicine in a fun, informal, easy way

July 10-19

Join us as we participate in ACP Alaska's Narrative Medicine Challenge in July! It's not too late to take a peek at our IG, imagine medicine in a new way, and comment on the prompts for a chance to win a prize. Keep it short and patient-free. To be prize-eligible, you must be an ACP member, follow ACP WI + the Alaska chapter, and comment before the end of July.

[Follow us to join in!](#)

New ACP Paper Offers Tips for Effective Collective Advocacy

Physicians are increasingly frustrated with the nation's healthcare system. The erosion of the patient-physician relationship, diminished clinical independence, the mounting burden of administrative tasks, and the growing influence of non-clinicians in the healthcare system have left many physicians disempowered, demoralized, and burned out. As a result, physicians, most of whom are employed by hospitals, health systems, and other organizations, are exploring collective action to enhance their ability to deliver high-quality care to patients, regain control of their profession, and improve their well-being. In this position paper, the American College of Physicians offers recommendations on how physicians can become effective advocates for their patients and their profession through advocacy, the organized medical staff, responsible collective bargaining, and other means.

[Read More](#)

Urge Congress to Support the Medicare Patient Access and Practice Stabilization Act

ACP needs all internal medicine physicians to urge their members of Congress to cosponsor the Medicare Patient Access and Practice Stabilization Act of 2025 (H.R. 879 and S. 1640)!

Background

On January 1, 2025, a 2.83 cut to physician Medicare payment went into effect due to complex budgetary rules and systemic flaws within the physician fee schedule and Congress failure to pass legislation that would address this issue. This is the fifth straight year that the final PFS rule includes an across-the-board cut to payment rates for

physicians and other clinicians. Congress has passed legislation over the past four years to mitigate portions of these cuts and needs to act again to stop the current cut.

[Read More](#)

New ACP Paper Explores Ethics of Long-Term Care

A new ACP position paper highlights the ethical challenges and systemic flaws in U.S. long-term care, calling for a shift toward patient-centered, equitable, and accountable care. Published in *Annals of Internal Medicine*, the paper cites inadequate staffing, poor oversight, and profit-driven models as key issues, worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. It urges ethical, evidence-based practices that respect patient dignity, promote equity, and improve transparency and accountability.

[Read More](#)