

# **RESOURCE GUIDE:**

## **Engaging Resident and Fellow Members at the Chapter Level**

**Last updated April 2025**

# American College of Physicians Council of Resident and Fellow Members (CRFM) Resource Guide

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## **Council of Resident/Fellow Members**

### **History of Resident/Fellow Membership in the College**

CRFM has been around for over ten years and was previously known as the “Council of Associates” from 1991 to 2013. It has been a pipeline for future ACP leadership, to include ACP Governors, Regents, and Presidents!

### **National Council of Resident/Fellow Members Composition and Charge**

#### **Reports to**

Board of Regents

#### **Charge**

Respond to requests from the Board of Regents, committees and staff for review of programs, products and services. Advise the Board of Regents and Board of Governors on:

- Enhancing the quality of internal medicine postgraduate training
- Increasing the value of membership among Resident/Fellow Members
- Strengthening chapter-level activities and relationships at residency/fellowship training programs
- Aligning council activities with the College’s Strategic Plan

#### **Composition (14)**

Chair, who serves ex-officio on the BOR. Chair-Elect, who must be a member of the Council at time of election and who serves ex-officio on the BOG. Twelve at-large members to be selected with consideration given to the College’s Diversity Policy as well as training year, training program, and Chief Resident experience. All members must be Resident/Fellow members of ACP at the time of selection to the Council.

The President and Chair of the Board of Regents are invited to attend in-person meetings as guests.

#### **Terms**

Chair and Chair-Elect serve consecutive one-year terms; while members serve one two-year term (for a maximum of four years if serving as Chair-Elect and Chair).

## **Responsibilities of National Council Representatives**

Council representatives are charged with advising ACP regarding the policy, programs, products, and services provided by the College for Resident and Fellow Members. Representatives also serve as a resource for chapter CRFMs. Additionally, Council representatives serve as a mechanism for bringing forward issues from ACP chapters to the national CRFM, the BOG, and/or the BOR.

Each Council member is charged with:

- Providing a voice at the national level for Resident and Fellow Members
- Helping establish and providing support for chapter-level CRFMs
- Promoting the development of local Resident and Fellow programs
- Promoting participation in chapter meetings and the annual Internal Medicine Meeting
- Encouraging professional and leadership development

Elections for seats on the Council are held every year that a seat falls vacant. Terms are for 2 years. Elections are staggered to ensure continuity on the Council. Resident & Fellow members interested in serving on the Council, or a member who wishes to nominate a Resident/Fellow Member for the Council, should visit the [CRFM website](#) for more information or contact staff via e-mail at [acpgovernance@acponline.org](mailto:acpgovernance@acponline.org). Elections are typically held in the fall of each year.

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## Creating a Local Council of Resident and Fellow Members

Approximately 62 ACP chapters have already established chapter CRFMs to foster the participation of Residents/Fellows at the chapter level. To find out what is being done in your chapter, you should contact your chapter Governor via the [chapter website section](#) of ACP Online. The following information will help an interested Resident/Fellow-in-training to initiate the development of a chapter CRFM. No uniform structure has been mandated, which allows each chapter to create a council structure to meet local needs.

### Getting Organized

The first step in getting organized should be to meet with the Governor of your ACP chapter to inquire about the existence of interest and availability of resources to develop and support a chapter CRFM and its activities.

Second, you can request assistance from the chapter Executive Director in obtaining a list of current Resident/Fellow members from the Chapter Portal. Using these contact lists, the chapter Executive Director can send bulk e-mails to Resident/Fellow chapter members announcing planning meetings, news, and activities in which you would like these members to become involved. You could also reach out via personal e-mail or telephone to invite members to the planning meeting.

Third, a planning meeting with several interested members is paramount. At this meeting, the members should agree upon the purpose for establishing a chapter CRFM and identify some guidelines and a timeline with specific goals to be achieved during the first year. The established goals must be realistic and attainable. You can use the SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, reproducible, time-oriented) goals mnemonic for this purpose. Setting unrealistic goals may prompt later discouragement of all involved.

If a council is being formed de novo, the Governor and Governor's council must be aware of the members and approve its creation and membership, as appropriate. This facilitates communication between the Governor and the chapter CRFM.

Next, you will want to establish some parameters for your chapter CRFM, such as structure (officers, key members), terms of service, election of new members, and number of meetings per year. The Addendum contains sample council operating rules that can be modified according to the specific needs of your group and your chapter. The following are some proposed structure models for your consideration that can be adjusted to suit your needs.

**Model 1:** Resident/Fellow members are invited by chapter Governor/Chapter council as potential initial council members; the Governor participates as moderator at an initial planning meeting.

**Model 2:** Two representatives from each major region within the chapter are identified; 2-year (staggered) appointments are implemented; Chair may initially be appointed by the Governor and subsequently elected from among members of the council.

Special Note: Several established chapter CRFMs have found it beneficial for their Chair to attend the Governor's council meeting as either a voting or nonvoting member depending on the structure. One chapter CRFM indicated that all CRFM members are invited to attend the twice-yearly Governor's council meetings as observers to meet the chapter leaders and learn about the chapter structure. Chapters are encouraged to consider these relationships when developing chapter CRFMs.

## **Purpose and Goals**

One of the first steps in forming a chapter CRFM is creating a statement of your purpose and goals. This provides you with an overall vision for the council. Working with your chapter Governor, you can adopt or modify the purpose to meet the needs of your chapter. It should be realistic, measurable, and attainable. Whatever purpose you select, it should be reexamined periodically and updated as necessary. Governors should provide information to the chapter CRFM about funding available for local events.

### **Goals**

Having established the direction you want your council to take, you now want to define goals to fulfill your overall mission. Each should contain a strategy for meeting that goal. Your council's goals may include any or all of the following:

#### ***Foster Interest in ACP***

Encourage Resident/Fellow membership and a lifelong interest in ACP. Encourage advancement to [Fellowship](#) and representation on local and [national ACP committees](#).

#### ***Foster Educational Opportunities***

Encourage participation in local and national ACP activities. Work with the Governor to create chapter meeting programming of interest to Resident/Fellow members, including leadership development; maintenance of certification courses; and workshops on other topics of interest to Residents/Fellows, such as well-being, coding and billing, and advocacy. Publicize local and national educational opportunities. Work with medical organizations to promote continuing medical education.

#### ***Provide Practice Management Resources***

Provide information useful for Resident/Fellow Members as they begin their practice, such as evaluation of practice setting opportunities, junior faculty development, financial advice, and contract negotiation. A variety of resources is available at ACP Online in the [Practice Resources](#) section.

#### ***Support Public Policy Concerns***

Monitor local and national health policy, how it relates to internal medicine, and physician and patient welfare. Discuss issues at the chapter level and develop resolutions to be submitted for

consideration at BOG meetings. Use the [ACP Virtual Advocacy Toolkit](#) to engage with local and national policymakers. Get involved with ACP's [Advocates for Internal Medicine Network](#).

### ***Encourage an Interest in Community Service***

Encourage participation in community service projects to promote further discussion of volunteer service and promote ACP. A variety of resources is available at ACP Online in the [Volunteering](#) section.

## **Council Operating Rules**

Work with your chapter Governor and chapter staff to identify Council Operating Rules.

## **Local and National Support and Resources**

Your ACP chapter Governor is a valuable resource for information about ACP, current issues at the leadership level, and past and present projects both local and national. Please refer to the [chapter website page](#) at ACP Online for your Governor's contact information. The Governor, chapter staff, and Chapter CRFM should work together to coordinate Resident/Fellow activities at chapter meetings. Keeping in close contact with your chapter Governor is a key step to running an effective chapter council.

The Chair-elect of the national CRFM serves as your connection to the advisory body of the College's governance, the Board of Governors (BOG), in submitting resolutions and representing issues. However, the Chair serves as the liaison between the national CRFM and the College's decision-making body, the Board of Regents (BOR). Establishing a regular communication link with [national CRFM representatives](#) will serve as an efficient mode of communication. They can update you on Resident/Fellow activities in other chapters or at the national level, help you with questions and issues within your chapter council, and help you to publicize good ideas and successful projects to the rest of the membership.

### ***Resident/Fellow Membership Benefits***

Information about [national benefits for Resident/Fellow members](#) is available at ACP Online.

### ***John Tooker Evergreen Awards Program***

The College recognizes that the strength of the organization is grounded in its local chapters. Because of this, a program was created to recognize outstanding chapter efforts. The [John Tooker Evergreen Awards Program](#) provides visibility and recognition to chapters that have been successful in implementing programs to increase membership, improve communication, bolster member involvement and diversity activities, and foster careers in internal medicine.

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## **Involving Resident/Fellow Members**

### **Ways to Attract and Involve Residents/Fellows in Your Chapter**

Below are ways in which to engage Resident/Fellow members in your chapter. These are suggestions that have been solicited from Chapters and have proven themselves successful.

#### **Chapter Meeting Events**

- Host Resident/Fellow networking/mentoring breakfast/lunch/wine tasting event in conjunction with the chapter meeting. Suggested networking event topics include physician well-being, contract negotiation, advancing to fellowship, and advocacy issues.
- Invite a Resident/Fellow member to join the chapter meeting program planning committee and organize courses and/or networking events targeted at Residents/Fellows to be held with the chapter meeting.
- Offer a panel discussion or workshop at the chapter meeting on a topic geared toward Residents/Fellows, such as part-time medicine, physician well-being, coding and billing 101, or faculty development.
- Hold a Resident/Fellow poster competition at the chapter meeting.
- Invite Residents/Fellows to judge the chapter abstract competition for students, residents, and fellows.
- Incorporate a national CRFM representative into your chapter meeting.
- Schedule a specific time during the chapter meeting for the ACP Governor or Governor's council members to meet and discuss relevant issues with Resident/Fellow members.
- Encourage Resident/Fellow members who have a shared national interest or specific expertise in a topic to share it at chapter meetings or other events.
- Additional ideas for webinars, dinners, and Resident/Fellow events using ACP resources
- Develop a game-show-style event (Ohio Chapter did "Who Wants to be a Board-Certified Internal Medicine Physician" event)

#### **Transition to Practice After Residency/Professional**

- Guide to fellowship application (include current fellows and fellowship program directors, also a way to create ties with subspecialties with ACP)
- Workshop on starting a practice, business aspects of practice
- Career Launching Symposium
  - Panel discussion with recent medical school graduates
  - Lunch where Residents met with "blue-ribbon" internal medicine physicians
  - Chance to meet the Governor's Council, practicing internal medicine physicians, and physician recruiters
  - Opportunity to participate in interview workshops
  - Sessions where Residents can speak and work with speakers of interest



### **Professional/Personal Development**

- Workshop on creating and maintaining a CV
- Dissemination of preventive health screening booklets and billing/coding pocket cards
- Create paper/digital informational content on any variety of topics
- Providing information on non-clinical issues such as regulatory compliance, managed care contracting, employment options, and asset management/financial planning
- Coordinate a mentoring program (Residents/Fellows with more experienced members or students with Residents/Fellows).
- Have Residents/Fellows develop their own Resident/Fellow Members newsletter (focus on issues for Resident/Fellow Members; can distribute to local medical students)

### **Wellness and Community Service**

- Health fairs
- Soup kitchens
- Fundraising activities
- Community service fair
- A day of sporting events pitting various residency programs against each other (Olympics)

### **Discussions & Workshops**

- Have internal medicine physicians who have been successful in different areas of practice do a panel discussion to give tips for success
- Workshops on contract negotiations and/or job search
- Introduction to ACP and its benefits
- Discussions on ethical issues in medicine drawn from Annals of Internal Medicine "On Being a Doctor"
- Workshop on improving oral presentation skills
- Workshop on how to prepare abstracts and posters for meetings
- Have a joint med-peds/IM educational session focusing on disease processes and transitions of care from peds to adult medicine

## **Suggestions for Including Residents/Fellows in Your Chapter Governance**

### **Structure**

The CRFM encourages chapters to include Resident/Fellow representation in their governance structure. Because all chapters are different in terms of size, finances, location of medical schools in relation to the chapter, and number of Residents/Fellows in the chapter, we realize a one-size-fits-all approach does not work when including Residents/Fellows in chapter governance. The key is to get Residents/Fellows involved, let them advise you on possible activities for Residents/Fellows at the chapter level, and then enlist their help in organizing and promoting those activities to other Residents/Fellows. Below are some ideas on how to involve Residents/Fellows in your Chapter Governance:

- Designate a seat to a Resident/Fellow on your Governor's Advisory Council.

- Develop a stand-alone Resident/Fellow Committee or a chapter-based Council of Resident/Fellow Members that reports back to the Governor's Advisory Council.
- Include Residents/Fellows on your Chapter Meeting, Membership, or Health and Public Policy Chapter Committees.

No matter how you decide to incorporate Resident/Fellow leaders, be sure to contact your Chapter Liaison so the Resident/Fellow leaders can be added to the Chapter Leader Network. This will ensure they have access to online resources to assist with Resident/Fellow activities. Moreover, they will receive regular e-mail updates about new activities, ideas, and deadlines specific to Residents/Fellows.

### **Best Practices from ACP Chapters (John Tooker Evergreen Award Program)**

Use experiences from other ACP chapters' best practices to engage Residents/Fellows. Refer to the Residents/Fellows theme for program vignettes [here](#)

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## Summary

We hope this reference has been helpful. Starting a chapter CRFM may be a challenge; however, the result is a body within your chapter that provides a forum for the discussion of Resident/Fellow issues, develops programs for Residents/Fellows, and increases opportunities for their participation in the chapter governance structure. We urge you to get involved. We hope your chapter CRFM will bring forward issues you would like to have addressed at the national level. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

For more information, contact ACP staff via e-mail at [acpgovernance@acponline.org](mailto:acpgovernance@acponline.org).

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## **2025-2026 Council of Resident/Fellow Members**

A comprehensive list of 2025-2026 ACP National Council of Resident/Fellow Members can be found [here](#).