

## ACP Launches Virtual Advocacy Toolkit

In lieu of holding the annual Leadership Day on Capitol Hill this year, typically in May, ACP has developed a virtual advocacy toolkit to enable members to engage with their members of Congress on key ACP policy priorities.

The toolkit is a virtual platform that includes different advocacy mediums such as sample letters, submitted electronically through our Legislative Action Center (LAC), sample talking points, for use in telephone conversations with lawmakers and/or staff, and sample tweets, for use through social medium platforms like Twitter.

The toolkit provides virtual advocacy

materials for these four actionable ACP priority issues:

1. Support and Sustain Primary and Comprehensive Care
2. Support Policies to Ensure Sufficient Numbers of Internal Medicine Specialists
3. Ensure Access to Affordable and Essential Medications
4. Support Policies for Frontline Workers During the Covid-19 Pandemic

Issue briefs on each of the above priorities are available that includes background/context on the issue as well as the “ask of Congress.” Chapters can

utilize (and send) these issue briefs if/when they correspond with congressional staff. All materials are designed to be succinct and user-friendly to help facilitate advocacy through a virtual platform.

Educational materials are also available to help guide advocates through the process. They include the recording for the July 16, 2020 Virtual Advocacy Toolkit Webinar, tips on virtual advocacy mediums and on engaging in social media, and background information/tips about Congress.

To access the virtual advocacy toolkit go to <https://www.acponline.org/advocacy/advocacy-in-action/virtual-advocacy-toolkit>.

---

## ACP Missouri Chapter Advocacy



**By Daniel M. Goodenberger, MD, MACP, ACP Chapter Governor, Missouri Chapter and Sarah Luebert, APR, Executive Director, Missouri ACP Chapter**

Missouri ACP held our first Advocacy Day event in 2018, and has held a successful event in each subsequent year, including an in-person event in early 2020. The chapter’s Health and Public Policy Committee (HPPC) selects legislative priorities each year based on feedback from our members. Our members were supportive of Medicaid Expansion, but with a Republican controlled legislature that was outspoken

*(Continued on page 2)*

# ACP Missouri Chapter Advocacy

*(Continued from page 1)*

about not passing Medicaid Expansion, we knew we had to walk a fine line on this issue. The HPPC decided to make it a legislative priority but not refer to the issues of concern as Medicaid Expansion, instead we talked about “maintaining Medicaid.”

Each year members have walked the halls of the Missouri Capitol building talking with their legislators about the importance of healthcare to Missourians, opposing work requirements, drug testing and block grants. As part of our Advocacy Day efforts we provide leave behind documents for each legislator we visit so they have a reference to what was discussed and contact information in case they need to further discuss the issues.

When it looked like Missouri would finally have a good chance of getting Medicaid Expansion on the 2020 bal-

lot, many of our members became involved in the statewide campaign. Several testified at hearings and walked door-to-door to get signatures. After the Governor of the State of Missouri saw how quickly the efforts to support Medicaid Expansion were growing in Missouri he moved the issue from the November ballot to the August ballot.

With the issue going before Missouri voters three months earlier than anticipated, Missouri HPPC decided to take some action, but needed to do so quickly. One Missouri ACP member, Bridgette McCandless, MD, FACP, was very involved in the statewide efforts and has been for many years. The HPPC asked her to join a conference call to provide more information and to answer questions on the Missouri efforts. After the discussion with Dr. McCandless the committee decided to pull together resources and create a webpage on this issue, along with sharing information with our members.

A [Medicaid Expansion webpage](#) was developed with information on how members could get involved, voting information, absentee ballot concerns, and several resources for members to access on the impact and facts of the issue in Missouri. We included information on voting as there was a lot of misinformation about absentee ballots and the changes to voting because of COVID-19. We then sent information out to our members via email and social media posts directing them to the newly created web page.

Additionally, Missouri was seeing a spike in requests for absentee ballots and the current pandemic caused some concern about having notaries available. Missouri ACP Governor, Daniel Goodenberger, MD, MACP, asked Washington University if they would allow their campus notaries to be available to notarize absentee ballots for their physicians and staff and they agreed.

Medicaid Expansion passed on August 4 in Missouri by 53 percent of the votes.

## 2020 Richard Neubauer Advocate of the Year Award



Heather Brislen, MD, FACP is the 2020 Richard Neubauer Advocate of the Year Award winner. The Neubauer

Award, presented each year during Leadership Day in Washington, DC, recognizes individuals who have made exceptional efforts in support of the College's advocacy program.

Dr. Brislen has been an active member of the College and has a distinguished record of advocacy on ACP's priorities. She is currently the ACP governor for the New Mexico chapter.

Dr. Brislen spearheaded the New

Mexico (NM) chapter's resolution on explicitly including abortion access and care as a vital part of comprehensive women's health care that consequently was adopted by ACP's Board of Governors and its Board of Regents. That policy is now an integral part of the ACP advocacy agenda. She has attended Leadership Day events, and has engaged very actively with her lawmakers and their staff on Capitol Hill. She has also helped to mentor and educate NM chapter members on what to expect during Leadership Day and how to be most effective.

In addition, Dr. Brislen has championed the chapter's efforts in partnering with the local medical society on a state legislative action day, resulting in

NM ACP chapter members meeting with elected state representatives to advocate for issues important to internists and patients. She served as a leader in helping to engage medical students and physicians in advocacy during the 2019 legislative session on women's health. She also led a successful effort that resulted in NM revising its allopathic medical licensing application so as to no longer ask stigmatizing questions about mental health diagnoses. For these reasons, we have chosen her as the 2020 Richard Neubauer Advocate for Internal Medicine award recipient.

The award is typically presented to the winner during the Leadership Day event in the year of the award. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the subsequent cancellation of Leadership Day 2020, presentation of this award will be made to her at a later date.