

The History of ACP Fellowship

Fellowship in organized medicine has evolved over the past 500 years, and it was a foundational element in the creation of ACP. This infographic highlights Fellowship's evolution and the significance it holds for the profession and the public.

1518

The Royal College of Physicians of London is created. Those admitted are designated as achieving Fellowship.

1860

The Royal College of Physicians becomes a tiered organization consisting of both a "membership" and a higher level, "Fellow" class.

1885

The Association of American Physicians (AAP) is founded by seven physicians, including William Osler.

1910

Publication of the Flexner Report leads to higher standards for medical training and a radical restructuring of the U.S. medical education system.

1913

The first American medical specialty societies are formed, incorporating Fellowship as a fundamental component to emphasize the importance of recognizing excellence.

1915

The standardization of medical licensure leads to the creation of the National Board of Medical Examiners.

1915

The American College of Physicians is founded as a tiered system with two separate but related organizations: the American Congress on Internal Medicine, open to all physicians interested in internal medicine, and ACP, whose membership is derived from the larger Congress by advancement to Fellowship.

1926

The Congress merges with the College to form ACP. A new Associate category of membership is created as an entry point for internists and becomes a prerequisite for qualification for Fellowship.

1936

ACP sponsors the development of the American Board of Internal Medicine and requires certification by this organization as a criterion for advancement to Fellowship.

Today

Achieving Fellowship remains the primary way that ACP recognizes significant contributions and achievements in internal medicine.