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# FAMILY MEDICINE *for* AMERICA'S HEALTH

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## Future of Family Medicine 2.0

### Organizational Update #7

June 2014

We are pleased to report that the planning phase of the Family Medicine for America's Health initiative has been completed. As a reminder, the purpose of this effort was to develop a multi-year strategic plan and communications program to address the role of family medicine in the changing health care landscape. To read earlier updates from Family Medicine for America's Health: Future of Family Medicine 2.0, please visit the project Web page at [www.fmahealth.org](http://www.fmahealth.org).

The Boards of Directors of each of the seven original sponsoring organizations, plus the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFP), have approved both the strategic and communications plans. The eight organizations have pledged more than \$20,000,000 over the next five years to implement both plans, which are described in further detail below.

Moving forward, this effort will be known simply as Family Medicine for America's Health. An Implementation Committee has been formed that will drive the next phase of this work.

Representatives include:

- Glen Stream, M.D., M.B.I. – Chair (AAFP)
- Tom Campbell, M.D. (ADFM)
- Jerry Kruse, M.D., M.S.P.H. (STFM)
- Paul Martin, D.O. (ACOFP)
- Norman Oliver, M.D. (NAPCRG)
- Bob Phillips, M.D. (ABFM)
- Mike Tuggy, M.D. (AFMRD)
- Jane Weida, M.D. (AAFP Foundation)

Four additional members are being recruited for the Implementation Committee, representing the following stakeholder categories:

- Family physician in full-time practice (practice size of five physicians or fewer)
- Young physician leader in family medicine (five to seven years post-residency)
- Patient advocate
- AAFP chapter executive

## Strategic Plan

Strategic planning consulting firm CFAR developed the strategy in an intensive eight-month effort that included:

- A strategy survey (taken by hundreds of family physicians, as well as by other primary care health professionals).
- Current state analysis of family medicine today and the role family medicine plays in the current health care environment.
- Identification of scenarios depicting possible futures for family medicine that were tested at a multi-stakeholder retreat attended by family physicians, other primary care health professionals, public and mental health stakeholders, policymakers, and employers.

The framework of the strategic plan is organized according to a few guiding principles:

- Put the patient and family at the center – always.
- Now is the time for family medicine to take up a leadership role in primary care, including reforming payment in ways that make it possible for family physicians to offer patients and their families the highest quality primary care.
- Family medicine must clearly state its vision for the next five to seven years and pursue actions specifically linked to strategies in six critical areas: practice, payment, workforce education, technology, research and engagement.
- Family medicine can't prove the value of primary care alone. Family medicine leaders must take a leadership role in building partnerships and alliances with a variety of stakeholders in the wider health care system – with patients, other primary care health professions and national policy organizations, among others.

The complete strategic plan will be published in an article in the *Annals of Family Medicine* later this year.

## Communications Plan

Communications consulting firm APCO Worldwide conducted extensive quantitative and qualitative research to develop an evidence-based communications program to demonstrate that family physicians are leaders in the new and evolving health care environment and advocates for patient health. (Detailed findings of the research are provided in earlier editions of the monthly reports.) The plan outlined the following goals:

- Position family physicians as leaders and central to the delivery of quality care for patients.
- Increase patient understanding of the value of primary care and of receiving primary care through a family physician.
- Improve patient engagement in prevention and health care management.
- Attract the best and brightest students to the practice of family medicine.
- Shift the payment model to support comprehensive payment reform.

Stakeholder perceptions of family physicians are favorable and higher than those of almost every other medical specialty. With these favorable perceptions come high expectations. The research showed that patients want and need a primary care physician – particularly a family physician – to be at the center of their health care.

A number of concepts and themes were tested for this effort. The winning theme will be launched at the AAFP Assembly in Washington, D.C., in October 2014.

This campaign will be used as an advocacy platform to communicate with consumers about their critical role in creating a strong primary care system that improves health. Research examined an exhaustive list of areas where stakeholders believe family medicine must focus. The four focus areas that emerged as most relevant and needed were: prevention and health promotion, health disparities, patient education and engagement, and chronic and complex disease management.

The communications strategy will drive broad, long-term social goals, while strengthening family medicine's identity, cohesion and capacity to deliver on the triple aim (improving patient care and outcomes and lowering costs). The campaign will use integrated communications and will include policymaker outreach, workplace outreach, paid media, earned media placements, stakeholder engagement, corporate and organizational partnerships, and a strong online presence.

### **Next Steps**

We will continue to provide regular updates on the implementation of this important effort. Watch these reports for opportunities to learn more and weigh in on the process.