

# Family Medicine Updates



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## NEW ADVOCACY AMBASSADORS PROGRAM HELPS AAFP MEMBERS ENGAGE WITH THEIR LEGISLATORS

The AAFP has launched a new Advocacy Ambassadors program that allows members to easily and meaningfully engage with their federal and state lawmakers on key family medicine issues. This new initiative, which evolved from the Academy's Key Contacts program, helps family physician advocates broaden their reach and build relationships.

Bolstered by the Academy, Ambassadors will operate across the full spectrum of advocacy, working toward continuous engagement and involvement in shaping health care policy and improving patient outcomes where they work and live. Details, including a form to join the program, are available at <https://www.aafp.org/advocacy/ambassadors.html>.

The AAFP has outlined its 2025 policy priorities in letters that call for the administration and the 119th Congress to:

- Boost federal investment in primary care by enacting long-term, comprehensive reforms to fee-for-service payment, including Medicare physician payment
- Support promising alternative payment models and continue clearing the path for a transition to value-based payment
- Address the health care consolidation and misaligned incentives that jeopardize patients' access to primary care
- Reduce family physicians' administrative burden by reforming utilization management processes and better leveraging the potential of artificial intelligence, among other actions
- Increase and sustain the primary care workforce, with particular focus on robust funding for the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education Program, the National Health Service Corps, and any other programs that help to recruit, train, and retain primary care physicians
- Promote strong public health by ensuring that all Americans have access to high-quality primary care, including all recommended vaccines for patients of all ages

This work to strengthen family medicine practices and improve community health nationwide is just one pillar of the Academy's advocacy. Beyond this federal advocacy, the AAFP's policy portfolio includes state advocacy, chapter advocacy, and private-payer advocacy.

These interwoven efforts are complex, as are the issues at play and the strategies employed to bring about change. But they're all rooted in a simple aim: amplifying the needs and

interests of members and their patients. And the AAFP also has increased the organization's influence with federal and state policymakers, as well as with public and private payers.

Thanks in large part to the Academy's leadership over many years, these entities understand that primary care is central to the nation's health. Adding member voices to this advocacy demonstrates that these efforts are rooted in family physicians' deep expertise and experience, and in the roots they have put down in their communities.

— AAFP News



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## STFM ANNOUNCES NEW POINT OF CARE ULTRASOUND TASK FORCE AND INITIATIVE ON POCUS FAMILY MEDICINE EDUCATION

Point of Care Ultrasound (POCUS) has been shown to have a positive impact on patient care.<sup>1</sup> As the demand for and use of POCUS in clinical practice grows, so does the need for training in graduate medical education.<sup>2</sup> The ACGME Family Medicine Program Requirements that went into effect in July 2024 require programs to ensure residents gain experience using POCUS in clinical care.<sup>3</sup> The rapid rise of POCUS has resulted in an environment where there is very little standardization in curriculum and competency assessment, and few faculty members have the necessary skills and resources to teach it to family medicine residents.<sup>4</sup>

Recognizing this gap, the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine (STFM) developed a multi-year initiative to develop and implement a competency-based, standardized curriculum for POCUS training. Project FOCUS: Finding Consensus for POCUS Standards in Family Medicine Education and Competency Based Assessment is a 3-year initiative supported by the American Board of Family Medicine and implemented by a 12-member Task Force with expertise in POCUS education in family medicine in diverse settings across the country.

The objectives of Project FOCUS include:

- Develop a consensus on POCUS competencies and curriculum for family medicine residency training
- Create a vision and plan for competency-based assessments for POCUS education
- Aligning the specialty of family medicine to push POCUS education forward

The Task Force will achieve these objectives by building consensus on competencies using Delphi and other consensus