

for providing a medical home is being heard. According to Rep Lois Capps, D-Calif, a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, Congress needs to adopt a Medicare payment system that compensates physicians for providing primary health care services. Capps, speaking during the AAFP Family Medicine Congressional Conference in Washington May 16-18, told attendees that "a new physician fee system should accurately reflect the value of providing primary care."

According to former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, the medical home will become a major component of managing patient health care as the nation's health care system moves toward integrating innovative technologies and places a greater emphasis on preventive care. Gingrich, who is the founder of the Center for Health Transformation, was speaking during a Capitol Hill briefing on April 23.

### Chronic Disease

The medical home model also recognizes the importance of primary care physicians in coordinating treatment for the chronically ill. The medical home model "is based on the fact that most health care for the chronically ill takes place in primary care settings, such as the offices of family physicians," said Kellerman in his testimony before the Subcommittee on Health.

He added, "This model, with its emphasis on care coordination, has been tested in dozens of studies and has repeatedly shown its value because of the prevalence of chronic disease among the elderly." More than 80% of Medicare beneficiaries have at least 1 chronic condition, and two-thirds suffer from more than 1 chronic condition, according to Kellerman. Twenty percent of Medicare recipients have 5 or more chronic conditions, accounting for two-thirds of Medicare spending.

The high costs of providing care for the chronically ill increasing are drawing attention. In fact, the AAFP has played a key role in launching a national coalition that has vowed to make the management and prevention of chronic disease a major issue in the 2008 presidential campaign.

The coalition, known as the Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease, or PFCD, consists of more than 40 organizations that represent a diverse and powerful cross-section of business and labor groups, health professional organizations, community agencies, and consumer and other stakeholder groups. The PFCD wants to

- educate the public about chronic disease;
- mobilize citizens to call for change in how governments, employers and health institutions approach care for chronic disease; and
- challenge state and federal policy-makers to make prevention and management of chronic diseases a primary concern.

One of the PFCD's goals is to make the US presidential candidates aware that chronic diseases are "key drivers" of health care costs, with the hope of convincing the nation's next president that the country needs a health care system that places a greater emphasis on prevention while providing "more effective clinical management of patients with chronic diseases," said PFCD's Executive Director, Kenneth Thorpe, PhD, a former deputy assistant secretary for HHS. The coalition plans to target key presidential primary states to generate attention and to influence the candidates' perceptions about the prevention and management of chronic diseases.

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## AMERICAN BOARD OF FAMILY MEDICINE ELECTS NEW OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

The American Board of Family Medicine (ABFM) is pleased to announce the election of 4 new officers and 3 new board members. The new officers elected at the ABFM's spring board meeting in April are: David W. Price, MD (Broomfield, Colo), Chair; Elizabeth Ann Garrett, MD (Columbia, Mo), Chair Elect; Joseph Hobbs, MD (Augusta, Ga), Treasurer; and Ross R. Black, II, MD (Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio), Member-at-Large, Executive Committee.

In addition, the ABFM welcomes this year's new members to the Board of Directors: Thomas H. Cogbill, MD (Lacrosse, Wisc); Arlene M. Brown, MD (Ruidoso, NM); and Warren P. Newton, MD (Chapel Hill, NC). The new ABFM officers will each serve a 1-year term; the new Board members will each serve a 5-year term.

The remaining current members of the Board are: John R. Bucholtz, DO (Columbus, Ga); Craig W. Czarsty, MD (Oakville, Conn); Thomas P. Gessner, MD (Latrobe, Penn); Larry A. Green, MD (Denver, Colo); Alain Montegut, MD (Portland, Maine); Dennis R. Schaberg, MD (Los Angeles, Calif); Russell R. Snyder, MD (Galveston, Tex); and Daniel K. Winstead, MD (New Orleans, La). The ABFM Board of Directors looks forward to working with the new Board Members and Officers as it continues the important task of sustaining the mission of the ABFM.

*ABFM Communications*