

# AAFP News: *AFP Edition*

## *Policy and Health Issues in the News*

### **AAFP Resources Encourage Physicians to Promote Breastfeeding**

The American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) recently released a set of breastfeeding resources, including an updated version of its position paper on the topic, to help physicians support expectant and new mothers. The position paper includes new scientific research that has been distilled into a condensed core paper with supporting appendices. According to the position paper, family physicians have a unique opportunity to emphasize breastfeeding education, beginning with preconception visits and continuing through prenatal care, delivery, and postpartum care, as well as during ongoing care of the family. The AAFP has also endorsed the 10 Steps to Successful Breastfeeding, which were developed by the World Health Organization and UNICEF in 1989 to boost breastfeeding initiation and duration. The United States continues to fall short of the breastfeeding goals set by Healthy People 2020, which call for 81.9% of infants to be breastfeeding at birth, 60.6% of infants to be breastfeeding by six months of age, and 34.1% of infants to be breastfeeding at one year of age. For more information, go to <http://www.aafp.org/news/health-of-the-public/20141118breastfeedingpaper.html>.

### **White Paper Urges New Focus on Office Laboratory Protocols**

A U.S. laboratory accreditation organization is urging physicians with office laboratories to establish tighter protocols to help reduce testing errors and redundancy. Researchers from COLA found a test redundancy rate of more than 20%, and noted that overutilization of tests can lead to higher costs and an increased likelihood of false results that may lead to incorrect diagnoses and unnecessary medical interventions. In a recent white paper, the researchers encouraged physicians and laboratory personnel to establish practices that align with patient-centered medical home (PCMH) standards in three key areas: controlling test utilization; identifying risks and controls for all three phases of laboratory testing (pre-analytic, analytic, and post-analytic); and coordinating laboratory results among primary care physicians, other health care professionals, and patients in the PCMH. COLA has developed a program called Patient-Centered Laboratory Excellence that aligns laboratory practices with PCMH standards by addressing quality in office laboratories. For more information, go to <http://www.aafp.org/news/practice-professional-issues/20141117colapaper.html>.

### **Researchers Project Significant Increase in Colorectal Cancer Among Young Adults**

Despite an overall drop in colorectal cancer incidence in recent years, some researchers are projecting that the incidences of colon and rectal cancers among adults 20 to 34 years of age will increase by 90% and 124%, respectively, by 2030. The study, which was published online November 5, 2014, in *JAMA Surgery*, also projected that the incidences of colon and rectal cancers will increase by 28% and 46%, respectively, among adults 35 to 49 years of age. This increase is in marked contrast to the 30% decline in colon cancer incidence in adults older than 50 years that occurred from 2000 to 2010. The retrospective cohort study used the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) colorectal cancer registry to examine patients diagnosed as having colon or rectal cancer from 1975 to 2010. The predicted annual incidence rates were calculated based on the estimated annual percentage change by age and cancer site, and were assumed to change at a constant percentage of the rate of the previous year. For more information, go to <http://www.aafp.org/news/health-of-the-public/20141126crcstudy.html>.

### **Editorial Makes Case for Training Medical Students in Health Information Technology**

Medical students need unfettered access to electronic health records (EHRs) during their training so they will understand how to use the technology when they begin their residency training, according to an editorial by leaders of the Association of Departments of Family Medicine that was published in the November/December 2014 issue of *Annals of Family Medicine*. The editorial points out that 78% of office-based physicians reported using an EHR in 2013. "Learning how to elicit medical histories while electronically recording key findings, using EHR-associated decision-making tools and providing management plans requires full EHR access," the authors wrote. They also noted that future physicians need to learn how to navigate patient registries and use other analytic EHR functions if they are to become skilled in population management. Safety reminders and point-of-care references provided by EHRs also are keys to providing top-notch care. For more information, go to <http://www.aafp.org/news/education-professional-development/20141126medstdnt-ehrs.html>.

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