



Commission on Health of the Public and Science 2023 Annual Report

Resident

Kreena Patel MD, MPH
University of Arizona College of Medicine - Phoenix Family Medicine Residency
Phoenix, AZ
Class of 2023

Student

Whitney Peterson, MD
Georgetown University School of Medicine
Washington, D.C.
Class of 2023

PURPOSE & SCOPE OF WORK

The Commission on Health of the Public and Science (CHPS) is an active commission with a broad scope of work that is split into two subcommittees. The Subcommittee on Public Health Issues mainly develops position papers and policy statements regarding current events and public health needs. The Subcommittee on Clinical Recommendations and Policies also develops position papers and develops clinical practice guidelines and endorses guidelines from other organizations. The commission meets twice a year at Winter and Summer Cluster meetings, with much of the work taking place in between the meetings.

The scope of work for CHPS is as follows:

1. Develop, endorse, and disseminate evidence-based clinical guidelines and policies
2. Synthesize, evaluate, and disseminate clinical research and scientific discovery
3. Advocate for societal, regulatory, and environmental initiatives that improve health for all
4. Promote health equity and the elimination of disparities in care and health outcomes
5. Support the provision of culturally proficient, person-centered care

ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS

Subcommittee on Public Health Issues (SPHI)

The SPHI carries out any AAFP resolutions and develops policy papers that focus on broad population health issues. This year, the subcommittee revised the following policy statements: "Aging," "Culturally Proficient Health Care," "Discipline in Schools," "Driver Education," "Homelessness," "Implicit Bias," and "School Bus Safety." The following policy statements were reaffirmed: "Health Education," "National Minority Health Month," "Physical Activity in Children,"

“Separation of Families,” and “Paid Sick Leave.” Two position papers are currently being edited and updated: “Mental Health Care Services by Family Physicians”, and “Prevention of Gun Violence.” Additionally, several Congress of Delegates resolutions are being addressed, for example, creating educational material for fire prevention and safety, and editing policy on care for transgender and nonbinary patients.

Subcommittee on Clinical Recommendations and Policies (SCRCP)

The SCRCP focuses on first-line review of supporting evidence for clinical practice guidelines and clinical recommendations for the AAFP, including preventive services recommendations and immunizations. The SCRCP is tasked with developing, updating, and evaluating clinical guidance to ensure relevance and values to members and patients. Projects this year included approving the following recommendations: “Screening for Latent Tuberculosis” and “USPSTF Screening: Breast Cancer.” Furthermore, the subcommittee members have been reviewing and revising the following AAFP policies: “Neonatal Circumcision,” “Genital Surgeries in Intersex Children,” “Hearing Loss, Deafness, and the Hard-of-Hearing,” “Medical Identification,” and “Medication, Device, and Biologic Agents Testing and Selection.”

LESSONS LEARNED AND THE VALUE OF SERVING ON CHPS

Resident Reflection

Serving as the Resident Member to CHPS has been a very meaningful experience. As this was my first leadership position with the AAFP, I appreciated the opportunity to gain further understanding into how the AAFP carries out its broad scope of work through commissions. The ability to weigh in on such a wide variety of issues, from dementia guidelines to public safety, has strengthened my understanding of the power of the AAFP to influence clinical and public health issues. I am also grateful to have the opportunity to revise the policy paper on Prevention of Gun Violence. The exciting work aside, one of my favorite parts of serving on CHPS is the opportunity to connect with so many inspiring family medicine leaders across the country, each with their own unique career path and interests. Being part of CHPS has strengthened my communication skills and created connections that will help me further my goals of improving health and healthcare on both an individual and population level.

Student Reflection

As the Student Member of CHPS, I have learned about the process of reviewing, revising, and voting on the AAFP’s policy and clinical recommendations through the work of this commission. Additionally, I was given the opportunity to interact with the broad network of AAFP leaders, including other students, residents, physicians, and community leaders around the nation who are involved with various AAFP initiatives. This position was my first leadership role within the AAFP, and my experience working on CHPS further strengthened my interest in working in public health and preventive medicine as a future family physician. I am extremely grateful to have gained exposure to both the strength of the Academy’s collective voice as well as the impactful experiences of individual family physicians who are on the commission. I hope to continue working to address healthcare disparities through advocacy and policy work throughout my career in family medicine, and my time on CHPS has given me the skills, tools, and knowledge to continue pursuing these goals.

Note: This report was prepared by the resident or student representative(s) listed and includes their account(s) of the business conducted during their term. This is not an official record of business proceedings from the AAFP or any other entity. To find out more about the business of the AAFP, its congresses, commissions, and current policies visit aafp.org.