



Commission on Quality and Practice

2022 Annual Report

AAFP Commission on Quality and Practice

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Purpose & Scope of Work

The AAFP Commission on Quality and Practice (CQP) focuses on improving the practice environment of family physicians. The commission studies and develops recommendations, policies, and programs related to administrative burden, emerging technologies and health data use, health care delivery models, health information technology, performance measurement, physician employment, physician payment, practice environment, practice management, practice transformation, private sector advocacy, quality improvement, and scope of practice and privileging.

Activities & Achievements

The commission met twice during the 2022 term: Winter Cluster was held virtually on March 5 and Summer Cluster was held in-person in Kansas City on June 4-5. Much of the discussion at both meetings centered around value-based payment and AI technologies in primary care.

During the Winter Cluster meeting, the group reviewed a draft set of guiding principles for value-based payment (VBP) which were designed by the AAFP to encourage the adoption of value-based payment models. The commission discussed the positive and negative aspects of VBP from the family medicine perspective and identified areas of improvement in the existing set of guiding principles. In response, a workgroup was formed to review the principles in depth and to develop a set of recommendations. The workgroup subsequently created a revised set of guidelines which emphasized that VBP should be responsive and adaptable, consider social determinants of health, focus on processes/outcomes that matter most to patients, and avoid unnecessary administrative or financial burdens for primary care physicians. This revised set of guidelines was reviewed by the entire commission and was adopted as AAFP policy during Summer Cluster. It was determined that the workgroup would continue through the January 2023 CQP meeting to provide further input on AAFP efforts related to VBP.

The commission considered several Congress of Delegates (COD) Resolutions that were referred to CQP for implementation including 2020 COD Resolution 301, "Developing Primary Care Standards of Ethics and Equity", which asks the AAFP to establish a membership workgroup to develop a series of

ethical principles to tech companies partnering with the AAFP. During Summer Cluster, the group discussed the role of AI technology as a tool to enhance the quality of patient care and decrease administrative complexity. Commission members emphasized that the technology must be careful to avoid introducing bias into patient care. Commissioners agreed that the AAFP should recruit members with varying expertise including clinical ethicists, diversity experts, and those with leadership positions in tech companies to form this workgroup. The goals of this group will be to review current literature on AI ethics in health care, establish a set of principles for how AI companies should conduct business in health care, and draft an AAFP document to guide the organization's partnership with AI companies. The work will hopefully be complete by FMX 2022.

Other resolutions were also reviewed, including insurance coverage for medical nutrition therapy, coverage of medications and behavioral therapy to treat obesity, coverage of home medical devices such as those for blood pressure monitoring, and others. The business of a new cross-commission workgroup for Behavioral Health Integration in family medicine/primary care clinics was discussed. A presentation regarding CPT coding was led by a passionate commission member, and lively discussion ensued. The matter was tabled for future meetings while next steps for addressing the issue through a resolution or workgroup will be determined.

The seven Member Interest Groups which are monitored by the CQP, namely the Employed Physician, Home Based Primary Care, Direct Primary Care, Telehealth, Hospital Medicine, Independent Solo/Small Group Practice, and EMR Optimization MIGs were discussed via a report by various commission members. Many groups, especially the Independent Solo/ Small Group MIG and Home Based Care MIG, were more active and showed particularly strong leadership.

We heard several legislative updates, with a few particularly exciting for the future of family medicine. Perhaps the most relevant for residents and medical students is the announcement regarding the expansion of Medicare to fund 1000 residency slots targeted toward underserved areas designated by HPSA (Health Professional Shortage Area) score over the next 5 years. Other hot topics included responding to attacks on reproductive health and addressing gun control.

Finally, the commission voted for the recipient of the Robert Graham Executive Award, which will be awarded to a very deserving candidate this fall!

Lessons Learned and the Value of Serving on CQP

Serving on the AAFP Commission on Quality and Practice has been an extremely valuable experience. We have had the opportunity to learn about the various challenges family physicians from across the nation face in their practices daily, including (but not limited to) issues related to billing/coding, physician reimbursement, prior authorizations and other administrative burdens, scope of practice, practice models, and staff shortages, all while in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. It has been exciting and rewarding to be a part of a group working to address some of those issues and develop solutions that will improve the practice environment for family medicine physicians. This opportunity allowed us to provide input to the AAFP from the student/resident perspective, to connect with other leaders in family medicine, and to further develop our own leadership skills. We hope to carry what we've learned from this experience into our future endeavors to create changes that will strengthen the specialty of family medicine!

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