

Family Medicine Interest Group (FMIG) Program of Excellence Award Winners

Excellence in Clinical Skills Development

University of Arizona College of Medicine-Phoenix

FMIG Operation

Our FMIG chapter is entirely student-led, with two dedicated student co-leads. As co-leads, we are responsible for organizing all events including planning, speaker outreach coordination, communication, and member recruitment. With the goal of increasing student exposure to the diverse and rewarding field of family medicine, our team is continuously developing creative and engaging events that showcase the breadth of opportunities within the specialty.

Goals

The University of Arizona College of Medicine's FMIG chapter endeavors to combat the nationwide primary care physician shortage by fostering early exposure to family medicine work. Our mission is to inspire and support medical students as they explore the diverse and rewarding field of family medicine through educational opportunities, clinical experiences, and mentorship.

We pursue this mission through leading hands-on workshops, inviting family physicians to speak with students, and organizing community outreach initiatives that highlight the breadth of family medicine. Our chapter collaborates with local clinics and healthcare organizations to offer shadowing opportunities, allowing students to engage directly with patients in primary care settings.

Beyond clinical exposure, we strive to advocate for policies that support family medicine and primary care workforce development. By fostering meaningful connections between students and family medicine professionals, we aim to cultivate the next generation of compassionate physicians dedicated to holistic, patient-centered care in diverse communities.

Faculty Advisor

Our faculty advisors serve as invaluable mentors and supporters, helping to ensure the success and growth of our FMIG chapter. Once the student co-leads plan an event, our advisors may help connect us with other physicians whose expertise aligns with the event's goal. They may also point us in the right direction of securing resources such as simulation models and educational materials. Their ongoing support and constructive feedback guide our chapter in growing from year to year.

Programs

Well-Child Check Workshop

The University of Arizona College of Medicine's Family Medicine Interest Group (FMIG) launched a Well Child Check (WCC) Workshop to introduce medical students to the fundamentals of pediatric preventive care, a cornerstone of family medicine. This event was designed to provide early exposure to clinical skills, reinforce the importance of continuity of care, and highlight the family physician's role in child development and preventive health. The workshop aimed to equip pre-clinical students with foundational knowledge and practical skills relevant to WCCs. Specific objectives included understanding the recommended WCC schedule per AAP guidelines, recognizing the rationale behind periodic health evaluations in children, reviewing vaccine schedules and key developmental milestones, learning strategies for effective parent-provider communication, and practicing the pediatric physical exam in a low-stakes environment. The idea for the event came when our leadership saw a gap in pediatric clinical exposure during the preclinical years. While our school provides exceptional exposure to adult patient training, many of our peers expressed a desire to develop training in a pediatric setting. With support from Dr. [REDACTED] and Dr. [REDACTED], we collaborated to design a practical, interactive session. Dr. [REDACTED] – family medicine physician and medical director for the Banner Family Medicine Residency Clinic – was invited to guide the workshop and provide insight into WCCs in clinical practice. Planning involved reserving space in a classroom, assisting in preparing educational materials, and coordinating with our guest speaker. The event began with a comprehensive talk covering the timeline and goals of WCCs, followed by discussions on vaccine counseling and working with parents. Students then practiced physician exam skills on infant mannequins under the direct supervision of Dr. [REDACTED]. Ten students participated in the workshop. Informally surveying students indicated that the event was extremely informative and well received. In the future, we look forward to continuing mixed workshops like so, where students can learn through hands-on experiences. This was our chapter's first time hosting a WCC workshop, and its success has encouraged us to expand it in future years. We plan to include additional components such as vaccine administration counseling and newborn care, and to collaborate with the pediatrics interest group for future events. The workshop reaffirmed the value of family physicians in providing longitudinal, whole-family care from infancy through adulthood.

Primary Care Week

Our FMIG chapter proudly played a key role in organizing and contributing to Primary Care Week, a collaborative effort designed to highlight the vital role of primary care in improving community health and to showcase the wide range of

career opportunities available within the field. We worked alongside other student organizations to create a week of programming that emphasized both the diversity and the impact of primary care specialties. Each year, the week officially launches with a town hall event, where an invited speaker — typically a leader or advocate in primary care — addresses a pressing issue facing the field. This session offered students the chance to not only learn but also engage directly with the speaker through an open Q&A, sparking meaningful discussions about the challenges and rewards of primary care. Throughout the week, students had the opportunity to attend lunchtime seminars, where different topics in primary care were explored. These sessions were designed to expose students to a wide range of primary care experiences — from addressing health disparities and practicing in rural communities to the day-to-day realities of family medicine, pediatrics, geriatrics, and more. One of the highlights of the week was the speed networking event — a dynamic and interactive session that connected students with practicing physicians from around the Phoenix area. This event created space for students to have one-on-one conversations with a variety of primary care providers, including adolescent medicine specialists, geriatricians, pediatricians, and rural family medicine physicians. Students gained firsthand insights into the personal and professional paths these physicians have taken, and many left the event with mentorship opportunities and a deeper understanding of the possibilities within primary care. Overall, FMIG's involvement in Primary Care Week reflects our commitment to fostering curiosity, mentorship, and professional growth among medical students, while promoting the crucial role that primary care plays in building healthier communities. We will continue to host primary care week each year, with plans for the upcoming year to include sessions on research in primary care, advocating for yourself as a PCP, and increasing exposure to fellowship opportunities.

Promoting the Scope of FM

As one of our goals for the organization is to increase student awareness of the vast scope of family medicine, we plan events such as family medicine fellowship panels, acupuncture in family medicine demonstrations, and procedure workshops. Many students have only a basic understanding of family medicine practice, and by offering these events we see more students interested in the specialty. Our family medicine fellowship panel invites residents and fellows from programs in Arizona to talk about their path towards family medicine and why they choose to pursue additional training. They speak with students about the pros and cons of fellowship, including the additional opportunities such as practicing C-sections as an OBGYN-FM physician, greater training in behavioral health, and more. This event serves as a strong exposure to the diversity of FM, and draws in more students. Another exciting event was held in collaboration with the Integrative and Preventive Medicine Interest Group. We invited a family physician who uses acupuncture in practice to talk with students about the history and proven benefits of acupuncture while demonstrating how it is used in family medicine practice. He showed a live application of acupuncture on a volunteer patient and invited students to try applying acupuncture needles using fruit as models. Most engaging for students not already committed to family medicine are our procedure workshops. Procedural skills tend to be an exciting draw towards choosing a specialty in the early stages, and we see a higher turnout at these events. Some of these events are planned in collaboration with other interest groups, such as with the Dermatology Interest Group to hold a dermatology-focused FM procedure workshop. We invited family medicine residents to lead a workshop using models to learn skin exams, biopsy, excision, wound care, and cryosurgery.

Promoting Collaboration and Networking

Our FMIG chapter actively promotes student involvement within the academic community by encouraging participation in professional conferences like the Arizona Academic Family Medicine Innovation Conference (AAFMIC) and AAFP's

FUTURE. These opportunities connect students with physicians, researchers, and peers both in Arizona and across the country, helping to explore the diverse paths within family medicine, build mentorship relationships, and stay engaged with current research and innovation in the field. At AAFMIC, we supported FMIG members in presenting their posters and engaging with local FM residencies. Additionally, we hold events throughout the year to engage students with FM programs and mentors. Students may find mentorship with our event speakers, pursue research inspired by conference attendance, and look deeper into the FM residencies and fellowship programs in Arizona. By supporting conference attendance and engagement with academic medicine, FMIG fosters early professional development and helps students feel connected to the broader academic and clinical community.

Advocacy and Community Service

One of the core pillars of our mission is fostering a strong commitment to community support through both advocacy and service. We believe that physicians have a responsibility not only to care for individual patients but also to champion the health and well-being of the broader community. Our chapter encourages students to stay informed and engaged with the evolving landscape of family medicine and healthcare policy by promoting membership and involvement with professional organizations such as the Arizona Medical Association (ArMA), the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), and the American Medical Association (AMA). Through these organizations, students receive timely updates on legislative changes, healthcare reforms, and advocacy opportunities that impact both future physicians and the communities they will serve. In addition to this, we actively collaborate with and support the advocacy initiatives of other student organizations on campus, including the ArMA student chapter's efforts to represent medical student interests at the state level. Our chapter strives to cultivate a culture of advocacy among future family physicians. On the service side, we organize and promote hands-on opportunities for students to give back to the community. This includes volunteering at local clinics, participating in health fairs, and working with underserved populations to improve access to preventative care and health education. Our service initiatives allow students to develop a deep understanding of the social determinants of health while building meaningful connections with the communities they hope to serve in their future careers. This year, we are beginning new service projects. We will be supporting a campus-wide blood drive each quarter, creating connections to volunteer with CAN Community health, and hosting a free health screening booth each month at the local farmer's market. With these initiatives, we hope to uplift the health of our community. Through these combined efforts, our FMIG chapter not only equips students with the tools to become skilled and compassionate clinicians but also empowers them to be advocates and active participants in shaping a more equitable healthcare system.