

ADVOCACY FACT SHEET

Family Medicine – Despite numerous studies showing primary care helps prevent illness and death, primary care is still undervalued in the United States. The American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) advocates for a primary care-based system with incentives to help medical students choose family medicine.

Family physicians receive nearly **214 million office visits** each year (almost 74 million more than the next largest medical specialty).

Coverage for All – The AAFP actively supports legislation that enables all people to access health care, regardless of income. However, the AAFP also recognizes that proper health care can only be possible with an adequate number of primary care physicians.

62 million Americans are living without health care coverage, while an additional 80 million defer treatment because they can't afford it. **20 percent** of Americans have inadequate access to a primary care physician.

Meeting Workforce Challenges – The AAFP has developed a series of policy recommendations that will allow our country to increase the number of primary care physicians for the short and long term.

With nearly 209,000 primary care physicians in 2010, the United States will require almost **52,000 additional** primary care physicians by 2025.

Loan Repayment – The National Health Service Corps (NHSC) provides scholarships and loan repayment awards to primary care physicians who make a multi-year commitment to service in underserved communities. In 2012, the NHSC placed more than 10,000 providers in these areas across the country. Without action, communities in need will be unable to count on future service from an NHSC provider.

An estimated **17,653 additional physicians** are required to eliminate all **health professional shortage areas**.



ADVOCACY AND YOU

How to Advocate at the National Level

Attend the National Conference of Family Medicine Residents and Medical Students — aafp.org/nc

Learn to write resolutions, participate in the Student Congress, and watch recommendations become AAFP Policy.

Participate in the Family Medicine Congressional Conference — aafp.org/fmcc

Learn how to lobby, and then go do it. Students can attend this conference in Washington, DC each spring. Several scholarships are offered.

Visit our Advocacy Toolkit — grassroots.aafp.org/aafp/advocacytoolkit

Our toolkit outlines ways to get involved. Whether you want to stay informed or meet with your legislator, our toolkit has resources for you.

Speak Out — grassroots.aafp.org/aafp/speakout

You are the expert. Use your voice to write your representative or senators about how pending legislation will impact you.

Become a Key Contact — aafp.org/advocacy/involved/keycontacts.html

Build a strong ongoing relationship with key congressional members in positions important to the policy goals and objectives of the AAFP.

Contribute to FamMedPac: The AAFP's Federal Political Action Committee — fammedpac.org

Its purpose is to help elect candidates to the U.S. Congress who support the AAFP's legislative goals and objectives.

How to Advocate at the Local Level

Join Your Family Medicine Interest Group (FMIG) and Organize an Advocacy Event — aafp.org/med-ed

Invite a legislator to speak at your school, start a letter-writing campaign on a significant issue, or partner with the community to engage in change.

Advocate for Your Profession

Identify a community health need and work with local leaders to make changes on behalf of family medicine.

Create a New Student Advocate Position with Your State Chapter

Encourage your state chapter to include students and residents in Hill visits. Organize a student legislative liaison to report on state activities to FMIGs.

QUESTIONS?

Contact grassroots@aafp.org