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## 2020 FEDERAL PRIORITIES

### **STRENGTHENING PHYSICIAN WORKFORCE:**

Enact a multi-year reauthorization of the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education (THCGME) program to preserve and expand training sites for primary care physicians in our nation's rural and underserved communities.

Support enactment of legislation that increases the physician workforce through increased graduate medical education funding and expanded student loan repayment programs. This would include programs that facilitate the expansion of the physician workforce in rural and underserved communities, as well as in medical specialties of need.

Educate Congress on the importance of funding a physician-led health workforce.

### **ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY:**

Preserve essential benefits coverage, consumer and benefit protections, and ensure that currently insured individuals do not unwillingly lose health insurance coverage as a result of any action or inaction by policymakers.

Promote network adequacy to ensure patients have access to covered services, including specialty and subspecialty services, and support the development of policies that minimize out of network billing.

Support enactment of legislation that improves patients' access to prescription drugs and physician services by alleviating arbitrary burdens in step therapy and prior authorization.

Support enactment of legislation that expands access to services and prescription drugs that treat substance use disorder and manage chronic conditions.

Support enactment of legislation that promotes opioid alternatives for pain management, funds research and treatment, and promotes greater access to substance abuse treatment.

Support enactment of legislation that expands the use of Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) when partnered with high deductible health plans.

### **ENTITLEMENT REFORM:**

Ensure continued funding to support Medicaid expansion as currently available, and preserve existing structure of Medicare and Medicaid minimum thresholds for coverage and payment.

### **REGULATORY REFORM:**

Support policies that reduce administrative burden, strengthen the patient-physician relationship, and promote the physician-led, team-based model of health care delivery.

Support value-based arrangements that provide adequate reimbursement and greater flexibility in service delivery, particularly for physicians in small and independent practices.

Support health information technology (HIT) policies that promote interoperability, secure electronic exchange of health care data, and eliminates information blocking.

### **PUBLIC HEALTH:**

Support administrative and legislative proposals that would reduce nicotine and tobacco use of any form, and promote cessation in all populations.

Support policies that promote utilization of evidence-based vaccine guidelines, and expand patient and physician education on the safety and efficacy of vaccines.

### **FY 2021 FUNDING PRIORITIES:**

Support funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and other agencies that will help facilitate greater support for osteopathic physician-researchers, and build research capacity and infrastructure at osteopathic institutions.



## 2020 STATE PRIORITIES

- **SCOPE OF PRACTICE & NEW LICENSURE TYPES:** Support legislation that promotes the physician-led, team-based model of health care delivery, which values each member of the patient care team while protecting patient safety through appropriate physician involvement. Support uniform, evidence-based licensure pathways for physicians, as well as non-physician clinicians, based upon scope of practice.
- **OSTEOPATHIC EQUIVALENCY AND RECOGNITION:** Ensure that legislation appropriately recognizes osteopathic physicians, residents and students, as well as osteopathic examinations and board certifications, as equivalent to their allopathic counterparts. Educate legislators about currently accepted osteopathic terminology and the distinctive philosophy and practice of osteopathic medicine, including osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT). Support the licensure and regulation of osteopathic physicians by osteopathic medical boards in dual board states.
- **TRUTH IN ADVERTISING:** Support legislation that requires all health care providers to affirmatively communicate their degrees and licensure type to patients. This helps to reduce patient confusion and protect patient safety by preventing fraud and deceptive practices, and enables patients to make informed decisions about who is providing their care. Support advertisements of physician board certification only if the board possesses legitimate training and testing requirements.
- **PHYSICIAN WORKFORCE:** Support enactment of legislation that increases the physician workforce through increasing funding for graduate medical education and expanding financial incentives to attract physicians to rural and underserved areas/populations.
- **TELEMEDICINE:** Support the delivery of appropriate health care services, including the prescription of controlled substances, through telemedicine and other communications-based technologies. Advocate for payment parity between these services and similar services delivered in-person.
- **PRESCRIPTION DRUG MISUSE, ABUSE AND DIVERSION:** Support a cautious, evidence-based approach to this issue that balances the need to curb prescription drug misuse while ensuring access to timely, appropriate health care for patients with legitimate pain care needs. Support legislation that promotes non-opioid alternatives for pain management, including OMT, and provides funding for research and treatment.
- **ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY:** Support legislation that enhances access to timely, affordable, high-quality care for all patients. This includes:
  - Supporting network adequacy and transparency standards for insurers, as well as physicians' rights to voluntarily contract with insurers and establish their own out-of-network rates, which enable them to maintain viable practices.
  - Supporting legislation to stabilize state health insurance exchanges and expand Medicaid to the extent allowed under the Affordable Care Act, while opposing policies that erode benefits, eligibility or coverage.
  - Supporting access to affordable prescription drugs, including by increased regulation of Pharmacy Benefit Managers.
  - Supporting enactment of legislation that alleviates patients' access to prescription drugs and physician services due to arbitrary burdens in step therapy and prior authorization.
  - Oppose any legislation that would interfere with the physician-patient relationship and physicians' ability to provide evidence-based information and care to their patients.
- **INTERSTATE MEDICAL LICENSURE COMPACT (COMPACT):** Support enactment of the Compact, which provides a voluntary, expedited pathway to physician licensure in multiple states. The Compact also increases access to health care for patients in underserved or rural areas by allowing them to more easily connect with medical experts through the use of telemedicine and other communications-based technologies.
- **PUBLIC HEALTH:** Support funding for research and public education regarding new and better ways to prevent and treat disease with the goal of helping people live healthier lives. Promote awareness of evidence-based recommendations and best practices related to public health issues, including firearm safety, vaping, vaccine-preventable diseases, etc.