



PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

2704 Commerce Drive, Suite A ♦ Harrisburg, PA 17110 ♦ p 717.564.5365 ♦ f 717.564.4235

CONTACT: Bryan D. Peach, Manager of Media and Public Relations
direct 717.635.7580 ♦ email bpeach@pafp.com ♦ www.pafp.com ♦ www.pafp.com/press

Patient-Centered Medical Home Bill Advances, PAFP Urges Further Action

(HARRISBURG, PA., Dec. 18, 2013) The Pennsylvania Academy of Family Physicians (PAFP), which represents more than 5,500 physicians, residents and students of family medicine, thanks the members of the House Health Committee on their voting out of House Bill (HB) 1655 and urges further action on the measure. Sponsored by Rep. Matt Baker, the bill would create a Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Advisory Council to guide the Dept. of Public Welfare (DPW) on reforming Medicaid in Pennsylvania utilizing this team-based model.

Twenty-six state Medicaid programs nationwide have already launched PCMH initiatives on a state or regional level; private insurers are using them as well. State Sen. Judy Schwank introduced identical legislation in the Senate – Senate Bill (SB) 1083 – which resides in the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee. Both bills were developed with legislators by the PAFP.

PCMH is the leading strategy to strengthen and modernize primary care. The concept is based on a “home base” or hub that revolves around the patient-physician relationship, where patients are aided in navigating the complex health care system and the patient’s individual needs are addressed. Patients are considered partners in the decision-making process, with the primary care team providing patient care and coordinating all of the tests, procedures, and follow-up care that a patient may need. The leader of a PCMH team is the primary care physician trained in family medicine, pediatrics, internal medicine, or OB-GYN.

“At a time when some elements of the health care community pursue changes that will continue to fragment care, we’re proud of family physicians bringing the healing arts together in an attempt to better our state’s Medicaid program,” said PAFP President William Sonnenberg, MD of Titusville. “We will continue to advocate for passage of HB 1655 and SB 1083.”

Interestingly, after introduction of HB 1655 and SB 1083, the Corbett administration was awarded a CMS Innovation Planning Grant to explore transforming Pennsylvania’s Medicaid Program. After a lengthy and inclusive process, PCMH was identified as a key tenant of what stakeholders from across the health care

spectrum believe should be included in the follow-up request to CMS for funds to implement reforms to Medicaid.

“My legislation would ensure those patients enrolled in Medicaid would have the best care possible through a health care model that is driven by a primary care physician who coordinates patient care with other professionals within the health care network,” said Rep. Baker. “This is a proven model of care that makes sense to implement as a way to increase quality health care and reduce costs within our Medicaid system, which accounts for 30 percent of the Commonwealth’s General Fund budget.”

The council would bring together representatives of the commonwealth, with health provider groups including the PAFP, the Pennsylvania Medical Society, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Physicians, the Pennsylvania Pharmacists Association, the Coalition of Nurse Practitioners, the Pennsylvania Association of Community Health Centers, the Mental Health Association of Pennsylvania, the Coalition of Medical Assistance Managed Care Organizations, and the Hospital & Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania to assist the Dept. of Public Welfare in exploring and developing a Pennsylvania-specific PCMH plan.

The Pennsylvania Academy of Family Physicians and its Foundation supports its members (including nearly 80 percent of Pennsylvania family physicians) through advocacy and education to ensure a patient-centered medical home for every Pennsylvanian. The Academy and its Foundation are the leading influential resource among family physicians and physicians in training in Pennsylvania; the primary voice on health care issues with state legislative and administrative branches of government, media and professional health organizations; and the leader on health care issues in the community.

###