



American Medical Association  
Women Physicians Congress Liaison Reports  
June 2008 AMA-WPC Liaison Breakfast

**American College of Physicians-submitted by Sandra Adamson Fryhofer, MD**

The ACP has been engaged in many activities over this past year focusing on women in medicine.

In March 2008, in honor of Women's History Month, ACP Online featured resources targeted at the College's female members. These resources included historical information about women in internal medicine and in ACP leadership, as well as a panel interview and podcast of female physicians featured in IMPact, ACP's monthly newsletter for medical students, and a profile of a former ACP Regent and current President and CEO of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Dr. Lavizzo-Mourey that was featured in ACP Internist.

The woman in medicine staff project team is working on the development of additional online resources for its female members to be made available in September 2008 in honor of Women in Medicine month.

The ACP also co-sponsored courses/events/workshops for women physicians: At Internal Medicine 2008 the College hosted its third annual Networking Luncheon for Women Physicians. The luncheon was moderated by Dr. Susan Thompson Hingle, FACP, outgoing Volunteerism Subcommittee Chair and incoming Illinois Downstate Chapter Governor-elect. Luncheon attendees were invited to sit at tables which were divided by topic of interest and moderated by an ACP woman leader.

Sample table topics included: conflict management/assertiveness, work/life balance, becoming an ACP Fellow, and women in academics. Attendees at the luncheon received a copy of a Women in Medicine booklet that was put together especially for this occasion. The booklet included biosketches and photographs of ACP's female leaders and 2007 Masters and Awardees, information about the College's mentoring and leadership development programs, and photos and testimonials about the importance of mentoring from several young female ACP Fellows. The booklet also encouraged attendees who are interested in being involved in the development of additional resources for women in medicine to get in touch with College staff.

The Membership Committee and the Council of Young Physicians also presented sessions dealing with work/life balance and becoming an effective leader.

**American Society for Clinical Pathology- Submitted by LoAnn Peterson, MD**

The American Society for Clinical Pathology, as a Society, has more than 130,000 members, of which 73% of the total membership is made up of women. ASCP is a blended Society that includes both physicians as well as highly qualified laboratory professionals. Our public policy agenda during 2007 and 2008 has included the following issues that are of interest to women-in-medicine as well as all of our colleagues: a fix for the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) under Medicare; a repeal of a CMS mandated demonstration project for competitive bidding for laboratory services under Medicare; a solution to a severe laboratory personnel workforce shortage; and, support for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

**American Academy of Family Physicians- submitted by Amy L. McGaha, MD**

AAFP Releases Harris Poll Results  
Improved Health Care Access Tops Women's Wish List, By Sheri Porter ,  
5/30/2008

"If we want to know what patients want from us as family physicians, we need to ask them" and then address their concerns, AAFP President Jim King, M.D., of Selmer, Tenn., told AAFP News Now shortly before an interactive press conference in Washington, D.C., on May 29. He was referring to the results of a Harris Poll survey commissioned by the AAFP that indicate a whopping 90 percent of women shoulder health care responsibilities for themselves and their families.

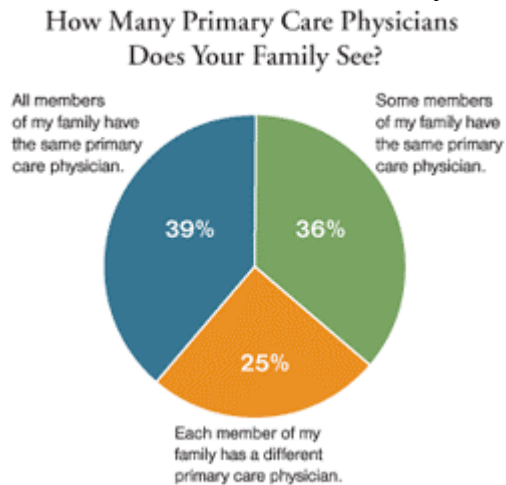
The survey, titled Fixing Health Care: What Women Want (9-page PDF; About PDFs), was conducted March 20-24 and gathered responses to questions about health care from 1,270 U.S. women age 18 and older. The poll results are an important resource for the Academy as it continues to help family physicians provide the patient-centered care "that our patients need and deserve," King said in the interview.

According to the Harris poll, women put better access to their primary care physicians at the top of their wish lists. In fact, 68 percent of women surveyed rated same-day appointments as "very important" or "extremely important." On the other hand, only 40 percent of women considered evening or weekend appointments an important piece of their access to health care. Survey results also indicate that

- ✓ 63 percent of women want their primary care physician to hold the medical history and records of all of their family members;

- ✓ 63 percent of respondents would like to have one primary care physician manage all of their family's chronic medical conditions;
- ✓ 62 percent of women want a physician who can coordinate care with the other health care providers who are participating in a patient's care; and
- ✓ 57 percent want the same doctor to provide health care for everyone in the family.

That's clearly not the case today; poll results show that only 39 percent of women said all members of their family currently share the same primary care physician.



Source: 2008 Harris Interactive poll conducted on behalf of the AAFP

Physician practices with up-to-date health information technology drew positive responses from survey respondents. About half of those surveyed want their primary care physician to electronically communicate with them, schedule appointments and send their prescriptions to the pharmacy.

King called the survey results "unsettling" during the press conference, because they indicate that many patients aren't getting the health care services they want from their physicians.

The poll results also focus a spotlight on some of the most significant cost drivers in America's health care system, said King. For instance, patients are more likely to turn to expensive ER care when their physicians don't offer flexible office hours during the workday or cannot accommodate same-day appointments for an acute illness.

Lack of communication among physicians who are treating the same patient leads to duplicative diagnostic testing that also ratchets up the cost of health care, said King.

On the other hand, because family physicians focus on preventive care and early diagnosis of chronic disease, patients generally stay healthier. "That prevents unnecessary hospitalizations," said King, which, in turn, contributes to cost savings in the system.

Moving family physician practices closer to the patient-centered medical home model of care (3-page PDF; About PDFs) will give American women what they say they want and will also help keep a lid on health care costs, said King.

Furthermore, the Academy will continue to offer FPs the tools they need to make necessary practice changes to get to that model, said King. He cited TransforMED, the Academy's practice redesign initiative, and the AAFP's Practice Support Division as critical resources for family physicians to tap into to find those tools.