

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL ON MEDICAL EDUCATION AND THE COUNCIL ON
MEDICAL SERVICE (I-12)
The Structure and Function of Interprofessional Health Care Teams
(Reference Committee J)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In June 2012, the Council on Medical Education and the Council on Medical Service agreed to develop a joint report on the structure and function of interprofessional health care teams. The impetus for the report came largely from the anticipated health care professional shortage in conjunction with projected gains in health care coverage due to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA).

According to recent analyses, the shortage of all physicians is estimated to reach 130,600 by 2025, whereas the shortage of registered nurses is expected to reach 260,000 by the same year. This health professional shortage is being exacerbated by an ever increasing demand for health care services. One factor influencing the demand includes a projected surge of about 30 million more insured Americans starting in 2014 due to the passage of the ACA.

Longstanding policy of the American Medical Association (AMA) in support of physician-led team-based care is building momentum in the context of budgetary constraints and the imbalance between the health care professionals shortage and increasing demand for care.

There are many examples from across the nation demonstrating that physician-led team-based care results in improved access to high-quality, cost-effective health care. From patient-centered medical homes to some of the nation's largest health care systems, physician-led interprofessional team-based health care has proven to be a successful model in the delivery of health care. As a result of the trend toward this delivery model, an increasing number of medical schools are shifting their educational focus to provide learning experiences with other future health care professionals in a team-based care environment.

The Council on Medical Education and the Council on Medical Service have collaborated to outline the practice of team-based medicine and the roles and responsibilities of health care professionals working in interprofessional health care teams. Such teams will likely be an important component of addressing anticipated access problems generated by the ACA.

This report provides background on the growing need for interprofessional team-based care, outlines the health professionals shortage and increasing demand for health care services, reviews quality and cost of health care, highlights key aspects of an interprofessional collaborative medical practice, and identifies interprofessional education programs. This report also summarizes relevant AMA policy, a new membership opportunity and discusses potential avenues for AMA advocacy and policy development, such as principles to guide physician leaders of health care teams.

JOINT REPORT OF THE COUNCIL ON MEDICAL EDUCATION
AND COUNCIL ON MEDICAL SERVICE

CME-CMS Joint Report I-12

Subject: The Structure and Function of Interprofessional Health Care Teams

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Referred to: Reference Committee J
(Veronica K. Dowling, MD, Chair)

1 Health care and how it is delivered in this country is evolving at a rapid pace. The delivery and
2 payment of health care has been transitioning for many years away from a fragmented system
3 toward interprofessional team-based delivery and payment models. The trends toward the “patient-
4 centered medical home” (PCMH) and “accountable care organizations” (ACOs) and increased
5 attention on “population health” have prompted a greater focus on the need for interprofessional
6 team-based care. Some physicians have been practicing in a team-based environment for decades,
7 but for others, interprofessional team-based health care poses a new way of practicing medicine.

8
9 Due to the potential complexity of the health care delivery system, independent practice by any
10 professional has become very difficult. Team-based health care is one step in ensuring that patients
11 receive the most patient-centered, highest quality care possible. All professions in a health care
12 team bring with them great strengths and unique perspectives that can be utilized when looking at
13 how to provide the safest, best possible care to patients.

14
15 The Council on Medical Education and the Council on Medical Service have collaborated to
16 outline the practice of team-based medicine and the roles and responsibilities of health care
17 professionals working in interprofessional health care teams. Such teams will likely be an
18 important component of addressing anticipated access problems generated by the Patient Protection
19 and Affordable Care Act (ACA).

20
21 This report provides background on the growing need for interprofessional team-based care,
22 outlines the health professionals shortage and increasing demand for health care services, reviews
23 quality and cost of health care, highlights key aspects of an interprofessional collaborative medical
24 practice, and identifies interprofessional education programs. The report also summarizes relevant
25 AMA policy and a new membership opportunity, discusses potential avenues for AMA advocacy
26 and policy development, and provides recommendations on interprofessional health care teams
27 including principles to guide physician leaders.

28
29 INTERPROFESSIONAL TEAM-BASED CARE

30
31 There is a growing need for interprofessional team-based health care. Numerous analyses of the
32 US health care system call for an integration of care to more effectively and efficiently provide
33 health care to the nation’s growing, aging and increasingly sicker population. At the time this
34 report was finalized, the Institute of Medicine (IOM), National Academy of Sciences, had
35 developed a discussion paper that was expected to be released in October 2012, which outlines the

1 following core principles to achieve high-value team-based health care: shared goals, clear roles,
2 mutual trust, effective communication and measurable processes and outcomes. The IOM paper is
3 intended to guide coordinated collaboration among health professionals to help accelerate
4 interprofessional team-based care.¹ Regarding health care professionals' training, team-based care
5 will be the focus of a new national health education center, the Coordinating Center for
6 Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Practice, which was established in 2012 through the
7 Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), and aims to accelerate the health care
8 system's transformation to an integrated system of coordinated, collaborative, team-based care. At
9 the time of this writing, HRSA is accepting applications and plans to award a five-year, \$800,000
10 grant by September 30, 2012.²

11
12 In March 2012, a legislative example of collaboration between physicians and nurses occurred in
13 the state of Virginia, which enacted "Practice of Nurse Practitioners; Patient Care Teams Act."
14 The Act was the result of a joint effort between the Medical Society of Virginia and the Virginia
15 Council of Nurse Practitioners with an emphasis on collaboration and consultation between
16 physicians and nurse practitioners who function in care teams as well as identifying opportunities
17 to expand access to care.^{3,4} The Act specifies that nurse practitioners must practice as part of
18 patient care teams and that health care teams be led and managed by a physician. It is anticipated
19 that the new practice model will specifically benefit patients in medically underserved areas of the
20 state as well as help address a future increase of patients with health insurance coverage. The
21 Councils believe that this legislation can serve as a model for other states seeking to reinforce the
22 important and long-standing relationships between physicians and nurses while improving access
23 to care for their citizens. The AMA is developing a state-based campaign to assist states that wish
24 to pursue similar legislation as Virginia's landmark new law.

25 26 HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS SHORTAGE AND INCREASING DEMAND FOR CARE

27
28 The ACA contains provisions for the expansion of health insurance coverage. However, obtaining
29 health insurance does not ensure access to health care. There is mounting concern about the ability
30 of the health care profession to handle the expected surge in patient volume given the shortage of
31 both physicians and nurses for the foreseeable future. According to a 2010 analysis by the
32 Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), the shortage of all physicians is estimated to
33 reach 130,600 by 2025.⁵ According to a 2009 analysis, the shortage of registered nurses (RNs) is
34 expected to reach 260,000 by 2025.⁶

35
36 The ACA attempts to address the shortage of physicians by increasing Medicaid payments for
37 primary care services provided by primary care physicians (i.e., family medicine, general internal
38 medicine or pediatric medicine) to 100 percent of the Medicare payment rates for 2013 and 2014.
39 However, the increased payment may not be enough to sustain physician participation in Medicaid
40 and it is questionable whether the enhanced payments will continue past 2014. The ACA also
41 includes provisions that support graduate medical education as well as programs to increase the
42 number of primary care health care providers. For example, the legislation authorizes
43 appropriations for an additional \$1.5 billion to the National Health Service Corps and increased
44 funding for Title VII and Title VIII health professions and diversity programs, which support the
45 recruitment of primary care health care providers, including physicians and nurse practitioners to
46 work in underserved areas.

47
48 The shortage of physicians and nurses is being exacerbated by an ever-increasing demand for
49 health care services. Factors influencing the demand include a projected surge of about 30 million
50 more insured Americans starting in 2014 due to the passage of the ACA; a growing and aging US
51 population; increasing numbers of patients with chronic disease including those related to lifestyle

1 factors resulting in epidemics of obesity, diabetes, and hypertension; and patients' high
2 expectations of the health care delivery system. In addition, many health care professionals have
3 deferred retirement due to the recent global economic downturn, but they will be unable to do so
4 indefinitely.

5 6 QUALITY AND COST OF HEALTH CARE 7

8 In 2011, the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) commissioned a study by the
9 University of Missouri to evaluate the quality of existing studies comparing primary care
10 physicians with nurse practitioners, specifically evaluating health care outcomes and cost
11 effectiveness. The authors found that while the evidence is insufficient to make conclusions about
12 comparability of care, substituting independent nurses for primary care physicians is not
13 sufficiently supported by current research either.⁷ In comparing the training of family physicians
14 and that of nurse practitioners, the AAFP predicts that the differences would likely impact breadth
15 and depth of patient care.⁸ The AAFP suggests that nurse practitioners should not work as
16 independent health care providers, but instead, should be part of an integrated practice arrangement
17 under the direction of a physician.⁹

18
19 There are many examples from across the nation demonstrating that physician-led integrated care
20 results in improved access to high-quality, cost-effective health care. Community Care of North
21 Carolina (CCNC), a physician-led patient-centered medical home model established in 1998, is one
22 such example. CCNC includes 14 networks of 3,200 physicians covering 67 percent of the state's
23 Medicaid population. The networks include physicians, case managers, hospitals, social service
24 agencies and health departments. A 2011 assessment found that from 2007 to 2010 the cost
25 savings attributable to the program was \$984 million. The analysis suggests that CCNC reduced
26 North Carolina Medicaid costs through care management activities resulting in lower hospital and
27 emergency room costs.¹⁰ Other examples are discussed below.

28
29 Most Americans agree that a physician-led team-based approach to care with each team member
30 playing the role they are educated and trained to play is key to ensuring high quality care. Results
31 from the AMA Advocacy Resource Center's 2012 Truth in Advertising survey indicate that
32 patients want a physician to lead the health care team. Key findings include:

- 33
34 • Ninety-one percent of respondents said that a physician's years of medical education and
35 training are vital to optimal patient care, especially in the event of a complication or medical
36 emergency;
- 37
38 • Eighty-six percent said that patients with one or more chronic diseases benefit when a
39 physician leads the primary health care team; and
- 40
41 • Eighty-four percent said that they prefer a physician to have primary responsibility for the
42 diagnosis and management of their health care.

43
44 Furthermore, 79 percent of respondents stated that nurse practitioners should not be able to practice
45 independently of physicians or run their own medical practices without physician supervision,
46 collaboration, or oversight. According to a majority (885) of respondents, while nurse practitioners
47 are critical to the health care team, they should assist the physician who should have the lead role in
48 determining the type and level of care to be administered. These results, combined with a close
49 look at interprofessional collaborative medical practices, show overwhelming support for
50 physician-led, team-based health care.¹¹

1 INTERPROFESSIONAL COLLABORATIVE MEDICAL PRACTICE

2
3 A June 2011 American College of Surgeons study assessed the capacity of an interprofessional
4 collaborative medical practice, including physicians, advanced practice nurses (APNs), and
5 physician assistants (PAs), to meet the future demand for health care services. While the study
6 concluded that efforts must be made to increase the output of physicians, APNs and PAs, it
7 emphasized that strengthening the clinical practice infrastructure and facilitating the delegation of
8 tasks to a broader spectrum of caregivers in new delivery models is key to addressing the access
9 problems.¹¹ The study's suggestion is consistent with AMA support for a physician-led
10 interprofessional team-based approach to providing care, which is already being implemented in
11 many physician practices throughout the country and through some of the nation's leading health
12 care systems.

13
14 The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics reported in
15 August 2011 that 49 percent of office-based physicians worked in practices that utilized nurse
16 practitioners (NPs), certified nurse midwives (CNMs), or PAs. According to the report's data,
17 from the 2009 National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey, the physicians most likely to work with
18 NPs, CNMs, or PAs are aged 54 and younger and are concentrated in primary care, in larger and
19 multi-specialty group practices, and in practices with a higher proportion of Medicaid revenue.¹²

20
21 Kaiser Permanente in California, Intermountain Healthcare in Utah, Geisinger Health System in
22 Pennsylvania and the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota are four examples of the nation's largest health
23 care systems.¹³ All are physician-led team-based health care systems that employ a mixture of
24 health care professionals to create interprofessional teams focused on patient-centered care. All
25 place accountability for patient care with the physician team leaders. These systems rely heavily
26 on structured clinical protocols tailored to their health systems to improve the experience of care
27 and health of their patient population as well as reduce the cost of health care. They embrace and
28 depend upon the expertise that each health care practitioner brings to the team. The use of
29 information technology such as electronic health records or centralized patient databases is viewed
30 as vital to delivering efficient, high quality, clinical care. The incorporation of disease
31 management, care coordination and social services focuses on the health of a population while also
32 keeping the care patient-focused. In addition, these systems routinely use continuous quality
33 improvement mechanisms such as tracking patient outcomes. All identify strong physician
34 leadership and physician support of their organization's mission and team-based approach to care
35 as being keys to success.

36 37 INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

38
39 In May 2011, the Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC), sponsored by the Association
40 of American Medical Colleges, American Association of Colleges of Nursing, American
41 Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine, American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy,
42 American Dental Education Association, and the Association of Schools of Public Health, released
43 its report, "Core Competencies for Interprofessional Collaborative Practice." The report
44 emphasizes that teaching students to work effectively as members of clinical teams is a
45 fundamental part of health care education. As such, the report outlines the following core
46 competencies that all training programs should address: values/ethics, roles/responsibilities,
47 communication, and teamwork/team-based practice. The IPEC aims to help schools develop
48 interprofessional training programs to better prepare health care professionals for team-based
49 care.¹⁴

1 An increasing number of medical schools are shifting their educational focus to provide learning
2 experiences with other future health care professionals in a team-based care environment. The
3 following are three examples:

- 4
- 5 • Loyola University Chicago is moving its nursing school to an adjoining building on the same
6 campus as its medical school. Starting this fall, medical and nursing students will train
7 together in a new, virtual six-bed hospital, learning to work as a team on simulated patients.¹⁵
8
- 9 • New York University School of Medicine and College of Nursing are collaborating on a new
10 inter-professional project that features team-based learning including real and virtual case
11 studies on common clinical problems. In 2010, the two schools launched a pilot program that
12 paired 15 medical students with 15 nursing students. The students were presented with
13 different types of health crises and collaborated on treatment plans for the patients featured in
14 simulations.¹⁶
15
- 16 • The University of Toledo (UT) Colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Health Science & Human
17 Service and Pharmacy have developed a series of interprofessional educational, clinical
18 research and regional/global outreach programs over the past five years. The broad curricular
19 impact of the UT Interprofessional Immersive Simulation Center (IISC) has also continued to
20 enhance team-based education and clinical care. In addition, the multi-year experiences with a
21 Team Leadership Curriculum, offered as a part of the Bridge to Clerkship Course to all medical
22 students by the UT College of Business, has been well accepted.¹⁷ All of these curricular
23 changes are assessed from a competency development perspective as well as a learner
24 satisfaction view point.
25

26 In August 2010, the Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA) issued a request for proposals to
27 establish Centers of Excellence in Primary Care Education. As part of US Department of Veterans
28 Affairs' (VA) New Models of Care initiative, the five centers that have been selected to participate
29 will utilize VA primary care settings to develop and test innovative approaches to prepare
30 physician residents and students, advanced practice nurse and undergraduate nursing students, and
31 associated health trainees for primary care practice in the 21st Century. The purpose of the Centers
32 will be to foster transformation of clinical education by preparing graduates of health professional
33 programs to work in and lead patient-centered interprofessional teams that provide coordinated
34 longitudinal care.¹⁸
35

36 There are a number of studies about the positive outcomes of interprofessional education (IPE).
37 However, there is concern about implementing IPE programs due to such things as differing
38 schedules across programs, "packed" curricula that do not permit additional IPE experiences, and
39 faculty and administrative resistance. Council on Medical Education Report 2-I-12, being
40 considered by the House of Delegates at this meeting, provides more information about IPE,
41 including a summary of current AMA policies and recommendations on medical education for IPE.
42

43 IPE is also available for practicing physicians and other health care professionals. The Community
44 Health Leadership Program at Duke University provides a three day intensive study with Duke
45 Medical Center faculty and hands-on interactions with many Durham community organizations.
46 Students complete the remainder of the program via distance-based learning, allowing them to
47 return to work while gaining the knowledge and skills to design and implement innovative
48 programs to serve the health needs of communities across the country.¹⁶ An example that brings
49 the training to the practice setting, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality in collaboration
50 with the Department of Defense, has been giving hospitals and practitioners a boot camp in team-

1 based care since 2006. The TeamSTEPPS program focuses on building up core competencies in
2 teamwork.¹⁹

3
4 Physician leadership and management skills are becoming essential as primary care providers and a
5 wide array of specialists become jointly responsible for the quality and cost of health care. Brody
6 School of Medicine at East Carolina University has established a Physician Leadership Institute to
7 foster the development of physician leaders. This continuing medical education program is
8 designed to enhance and develop leadership knowledge, skills and abilities through group sessions,
9 case studies, independent study, and practical application. Applicants to the program must possess
10 aspiration for leadership and meet a set of criteria before they can participate in the program.²⁰

11 RELEVANT AMA POLICY

12
13
14 The AMA advocates that physicians maintain authority for patient care in any team care
15 arrangement to assure patient safety and quality of care. The AMA believes that the ultimate
16 responsibility for the individual patient's medical care rests with the physician. Physicians must be
17 responsible and have authority for initiating and implementing quality-control programs for non-
18 physicians delivering medical care in integrated practices. To assure quality patient care, the
19 medical profession and allied health professionals should have continuing dialogue on patient care
20 functions that may be delegated to allied health professionals consistent with their education,
21 experience and competency (Policies H-360.987[1,2,6], H-200.994 and D-35.985[5,6]). The AMA
22 advocates that the appropriate ratio of a supervising physician to non-physician practitioners should
23 be determined by the physician at the practice level, consistent with good medical practice, and
24 state law where relevant (Policy H-35.975).

25
26 The AMA lacks policy regarding the specific clinical roles and responsibilities for certain members
27 of health care teams. However, Policy H-360.983 states that in order to provide optimum patient
28 care, it is essential that registered nurses participate in the management of analgesic modalities.
29 Specifically, a registered nurse, qualified by education, experience and credentials, who follows a
30 patient-specific protocol written by a qualified physician, should be allowed to adjust and
31 discontinue catheter infusions.

32
33 The AMA has developed the following guidelines for the integrated practice of physicians and
34 nurse practitioners (Policy H-160.950):

- 35
- 36 (1) The physician is responsible for the supervision of nurse practitioners and other advanced
37 practice nurses in all settings.
 - 38 (2) The physician is responsible for managing the health care of patients in all practice
39 settings.
 - 40 (3) Health care services delivered in an integrated practice must be within the scope of each
41 practitioner's professional license, as defined by state law.
 - 42 (4) In an integrated practice with a nurse practitioner, the physician is responsible for
43 supervising and coordinating care and, with the appropriate input of the nurse practitioner,
44 ensuring the quality of health care provided to patients.
 - 45 (5) The extent of involvement by the nurse practitioner in initial assessment, and
46 implementation of treatment will depend on the complexity and acuity of the patients'
47 condition, as determined by the supervising/collaborating physician.
 - 48 (6) The role of the nurse practitioner in the delivery of care in an integrated practice should be
49 defined through mutually agreed upon written practice protocols, job descriptions, and
50 written contracts.

- 1 (7) These practice protocols should delineate the appropriate involvement of the two
2 professionals in the care of patients, based on the complexity and acuity of the patients'
3 condition.
- 4 (8) At least one physician in the integrated practice must be immediately available at all times
5 for supervision and consultation when needed by the nurse practitioner.
- 6 (9) Patients are to be made clearly aware at all times whether they are being cared for by a
7 physician or a nurse practitioner.
- 8 (10) In an integrated practice, there should be a professional and courteous relationship between
9 physician and nurse practitioner, with mutual acknowledgment of, and respect for each
10 other's contributions to patient care.
- 11 (11) Physicians and nurse practitioners should review and document, on a regular basis, the care
12 of all patients with whom the nurse practitioner is involved. Physicians and nurse
13 practitioners must work closely enough together to become fully conversant with each
14 other's practice patterns.

15
16 The AMA has developed the following guidelines for the integrated practice of physicians and
17 physician assistants (Policy H-160.947):

- 18
19 (1) The physician is responsible for managing the health care of patients in all settings.
- 20 (2) Health care services delivered by physicians and physician assistants must be within the
21 scope of each practitioner's authorized practice, as defined by state law.
- 22 (3) The physician is ultimately responsible for coordinating and managing the care of patients
23 and, with the appropriate input of the physician assistant, ensuring the quality of health
24 care provided to patients.
- 25 (4) The physician is responsible for the supervision of the physician assistant in all settings.
- 26 (5) The role of the physician assistant in the delivery of care should be defined through
27 mutually agreed upon guidelines that are developed by the physician and the physician
28 assistant and based on the physician's delegatory style.
- 29 (6) The physician must be available for consultation with the physician assistant at all times,
30 either in person or through telecommunication systems or other means.
- 31 (7) The extent of the involvement by the physician assistant in the assessment and
32 implementation of treatment will depend on the complexity and acuity of the patient's
33 condition and the training, experience, and preparation of the physician assistant, as
34 adjudged by the physician.
- 35 (8) Patients should be made clearly aware at all times whether they are being cared for by a
36 physician or a physician assistant.
- 37 (9) The physician and physician assistant together should review all delegated patient services
38 on a regular basis, as well as the mutually agreed upon guidelines for practice.
- 39 (10) The physician is responsible for clarifying and familiarizing the physician assistant with
40 his/her supervising methods and style of delegating patient care.

41
42 **AMA INTEGRATED PHYSICIAN PRACTICE SECTION (IPPS)**

43
44 At its 2012 Annual Meeting, the AMA House of Delegates established the Integrated Physician
45 Practice Section (IPPS), acknowledging the physician-led integrated health care model as a specific
46 mode of practice. An outgrowth of the Advisory Committee on Group Practice Physicians, the
47 IPPS will represent doctors in physician-led, integrated health care organizations that coordinate
48 patient care across specialties and among physicians who share common records and clinical care
49 processes. Section membership includes two categories, Associate and Affiliate. Associate
50 membership is directed toward physicians who are in physician-led, integrated health systems,
51 while Affiliate membership allows for physicians who are in organizations working toward

1 becoming physician-led, integrated health care systems. The inaugural meeting of the IPPS will be
2 held in conjunction with the AMA's 2013 Annual Meeting of the House of Delegates.

3 4 DISCUSSION

5
6 Given the combined impact of health care budgetary constraints at the state and federal levels, the
7 imminent coverage of up to 30 million more Americans starting in 2014, and shortages of both
8 physicians and nurses for the foreseeable future, recognition of and support for physician-led team
9 based care is building. Due to the potential complexity of the health care delivery system,
10 independent practice by any professional has become very difficult. The future of health care
11 delivery is patient-centered and focused on improving the experience of care, improving the health
12 of populations and reducing per capita costs of health care. This focus is possible through the use
13 of team-based models of health care delivery.

14
15 The Councils suggest defining "team-based health care" as the provision of health care services by
16 a physician-led team of at least two health care practitioners who work collaboratively with each
17 other and the patient and family to accomplish shared goals within and across settings to achieve
18 patient-centered, coordinated, high-quality care.

19
20 In a physician-led interprofessional team-based environment, the physician leader should be
21 empowered to perform the full range of medical interventions that she or he is trained and licensed
22 to perform. All members of a physician-led interprofessional health care team should be enabled to
23 perform medical interventions that they are capable of performing according to their education,
24 training and licensure and the discretion of the physician team leader in order to most effectively
25 provide quality patient care. Only when each practitioner, including the physician team leader, is
26 practicing according to these demonstrated competencies, can the team as a group provide the
27 highest quality care. As a result, the focus shifts toward what the team can do rather than what
28 each individual practitioner can do.

29
30 In this setting, there is greater responsibility for the physician team leader than for other team
31 members. Accordingly, the Councils have outlined a series of principles to guide physician leaders
32 of health care teams. The physician team leader should make clear the team's mission, vision and
33 values; direct and/or engage in collaboration with team members on patient care; be accountable
34 for clinical care, quality improvement, efficiency of care, and continuing education; focus the team
35 on patient and family-centered care; foster a respectful team culture and encourage team members
36 to contribute the full extent of their professional insights, information and resources; encourage
37 adherence to best practice protocols that team members are expected to follow; manage care
38 transitions by the team so that they are efficient and effective, and transparent to the patient and
39 family; promote clinical collaboration, coordination and communication within the team to ensure
40 efficient, quality care is provided to the patient and that knowledge and expertise from team
41 members is shared and utilized; support open communication among and between the patient and
42 family and the team members to enhance quality patient care and to define the roles and
43 responsibilities of the team members that they encounter within the specific team, group or
44 network; facilitate the work of the team and be responsible for reviewing team members' clinical
45 work and documentation; and review measures of "population health" periodically when the team
46 is responsible for the care of a defined group.

47
48 Given the greater efficiencies and quality of care that team-based health care has the potential to
49 provide, the Councils encourage independently practicing physicians and physicians in small
50 practices to seek opportunities to connect with similar sized practices to form team-based health
51 care networks. Such opportunities exist through independent practice associations, virtual

1 networks or other networks of independent providers that may be practical given geographic and
2 specialty specific circumstances. The use of more sophisticated information technology resources
3 will likely facilitate communication among and between such networks and the teams of providers
4 within them.

5
6 New delivery models, such as team-based health care, are resulting in new payment models, such
7 as bundled payment methods and incentives that support and reward higher performance. The
8 Councils believe that innovative payment mechanisms should appropriately compensate the team
9 and all team members for team-based health care. In addition, the Councils believe that the
10 structure, governance and compensation of the team should be aligned to optimize the performance
11 of the team leader and team members. The governance of the team needs to provide authority to
12 the physician team leader. It is critical that the physician team leader, in addition to assuming
13 greater responsibility, be given the authority to make management decisions about the team such as
14 determining staffing needs, committing resources, constructing budgets, setting goals and
15 objectives, evaluating performances, and distributing incentives.

16
17 Health care teams fall into several categories, such as medical care, care coordination and health
18 care. Different teams provide different functions just as different team members provide different
19 functions. While team-based care is a group effort, physicians, due to their training and expertise,
20 are the natural leaders in overall care delivery.²¹ With this team leadership comes accountability,
21 even if the physician is practicing in an established health care system. Care coordination teams
22 often operate seemingly independently, with a designated team leader who most likely is not a
23 physician. Even so, the care coordination team leader should be obligated to report to and
24 collaborate with a physician team leader of the medical care team. Every medical procedure
25 performed by non-physicians must ultimately be approved, whether according to an outlined
26 protocol or by the physician reviewing and signing off on clinical notes. Patients interact with
27 different teams according to any changes in their health conditions. The Councils believe that
28 transitions between teams should be managed by the teams and be transparent to the patient.

29
30 In a physician-led interprofessional team-based model, the ratio of non-physician practitioners to
31 the physician leader has been considered. The “optimum” ratio is outlined in state law and
32 therefore varies across the country. Policy H-35.975 addresses the ratio issue in general, although
33 the Councils recommend amendments to update this policy in order to modernize the terminology
34 from “physician extenders” to “non-physician practitioners” and to include elements that should be
35 taken into consideration when determining the appropriate ratio of consulting physician leader to
36 non-physician practitioners, such as the specialty, physician’s panel size and disease burden of the
37 patient case mix.

38
39 The Councils believe that Policy H-160.950, which provides guidelines for the integrated practice
40 of physicians and nurse practitioners, and Policy H-160.947, which provides guidelines for the
41 integrated practice of physicians and physician assistants are still relevant and should be
42 reaffirmed.

43 44 RECOMMENDATIONS

45
46 The Council on Medical Education and the Council on Medical Service recommend that the
47 following be adopted and that the remainder of the report be filed:

- 48
49 1. That our American Medical Association (AMA) define “team-based health care” as the
50 provision of health care services by a physician-led team of at least two health care
51 professionals who work collaboratively with each other and the patient and family to

- 1 accomplish shared goals within and across settings to achieve coordinated, high-quality,
2 patient-centered care. (New HOD Policy)
3
- 4 2. That our AMA advocate that the physician leader of a physician-led interprofessional health
5 care team be empowered to perform the full range of medical interventions that she or he is
6 trained to perform. (New HOD Policy)
7
- 8 3. That our AMA advocate that all members of a physician-led interprofessional health care team
9 be enabled to perform medical interventions that they are capable of performing according to
10 their education, training and licensure and the discretion of the physician team leader in order
11 to most effectively provide quality patient care. (New HOD Policy)
12
- 13 4. That our AMA adopt the following principles to guide physician leaders of health care teams:
14
- 15 a) Focus the team on patient and family-centered care.
 - 16 b) Make clear the team's mission, vision and values.
 - 17 c) Direct and/or engage in collaboration with team members on patient care.
 - 18
 - 19 d) Be accountable for clinical care, quality improvement, efficiency of care, and
20 continuing education.
 - 21
 - 22 e) Foster a respectful team culture and encourage team members to contribute the full
23 extent of their professional insights, information and resources.
 - 24
 - 25 f) Encourage adherence to best practice protocols that team members are expected to
26 follow.
 - 27
 - 28 g) Manage care transitions by the team so that they are efficient and effective, and
29 transparent to the patient and family.
 - 30
 - 31
 - 32 h) Promote clinical collaboration, coordination, and communication within the team
33 to ensure efficient, quality care is provided to the patient and that knowledge and
34 expertise from team members is shared and utilized.
 - 35
 - 36
 - 37 i) Support open communication among and between the patient and family and the
38 team members to enhance quality patient care and to define the roles and
39 responsibilities of the team members that they encounter within the specific team,
40 group or network.
 - 41
 - 42 j) Facilitate the work of the team and be responsible for reviewing team members'
43 clinical work and documentation.
 - 44
 - 45 k) Review measures of "population health" periodically when the team is responsible
46 for the care of a defined group. (New HOD Policy)
47
- 48 5. That our AMA encourage independent physician practices and small group practices to
49 consider opportunities to form health care teams, such as through independent practice
50 associations, virtual networks or other networks of independent providers. (New HOD Policy)

- 1 6. That our AMA study innovative payment mechanisms that appropriately compensate the
2 physician and/or team for team-based health care with a report back to the House of Delegates.
3 (New HOD Policy)
4
- 5 7. That our AMA advocate that the structure, governance and compensation of the team should be
6 aligned to optimize the performance of the team leader and team members. (New HOD Policy)
7
- 8 8. That our AMA modify Policy H-35.975 by insertion and deletion to
9 read as follows:
10
- 11 Our AMA endorses the principle that the appropriate ratio of physician to non-physician
12 ~~extenders~~ practitioners should be determined by physicians at the practice level, consistent with
13 good medical practice, and state law where relevant, taking into consideration the physician's
14 specialty, physician's panel size and disease burden of the patient case mix. (Modify Current
15 HOD Policy)
16
- 17 9. That our AMA reaffirm Policy H-160.950, which provides guidelines for the integrated
18 practice of physicians and nurse practitioners. (Reaffirm HOD Policy)
19
- 20 10. That our AMA reaffirm Policy H-160.947, which provides guidelines for the integrated
21 practice of physicians and physician assistants. (Reaffirm HOD Policy)

Fiscal Note: Less than \$500

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