

## 2011 AAFP National Conference Student Congress Report

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The Student National Congress at the 2011 AAFP National Conference was a hot-bed of debate over critical issues central to family medicine. One testy topic in both the Student and Resident Congress was the AAFP's role in the AMA/Specialty Society Relative Value Scale Update Committee, or "RUC". A resolution was introduced in the student congress calling for the AAFP to withdraw from the RUC if the RUC doesn't implement recommendations made recently by the AAFP.

If you're a medical student who hasn't yet added 'RUC' to your overflowing toolbox of acronyms, some background may help. The job of the RUC is to recommend values for every service that a physician provides, and these recommended values are then used to help determine Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements for those services. Many primary care physicians have long felt that the RUC recommendations undervalue primary care, while overvaluing more procedure-based specialties.

The AAFP recently recommended that in order to ensure that primary care is appropriately valued, four additional primary care seats should be added to the committee of 29. Our congress was packed with discussion about the possible bias of RUC towards specialists, and although student representatives agreed that the RUC may be biased towards more procedure-heavy specialties, they ultimately voted to not adopt this resolution, believing that complete withdrawal from the RUC was not the best way to maintain the Family Physician's voice over reimbursements.

Interestingly, our debate at the student congress occurred right before news broke about six family physicians in Georgia who filed a lawsuit arguing that Medicare's reliance on RUC's recommendations is illegal and that the RUC is "highly biased" towards procedural specialties. Obviously, physician reimbursement is a fervent topic for primary care physicians, residents, and students, and I believe that passionate debate will only continue in our current model of healthcare. For more information, check out the AAFP's recent stance on RUC here: <http://www.aafp.org/online/en/home/publications/news/news-now/practice-professional-issues/20110610rucletter.html>

Matching the passionate tone of the RUC debate, the student delegates also discussed AAFP's 2010 "consumer alliance" partnership with Coca-Cola. A resolution was introduced to not renew AAFP's collaboration with The Coca-Cola Co., and to consult with state chapters before initiating new Consumer Alliance Program partnerships. The author of the resolution contended that there are plenty of other companies that promote healthy lifestyles and that the AAFP must explore corporate partnerships with these companies instead of the Coca-Cola Co., which provides no benefits to the health of our communities. Student delegates defending the partnership stated that the funds derived from the partnership are too vital to the AAFP to hastily abandon the relationship with Coca-Cola. Further, they argued that it is not the role of the Student Congress to advise the AAFP Board of Directors which companies to partner with. A similar resolution was also debated last year, and did not pass. This year's student delegates voted to adopt the resolution, making it official: student members of AAFP do not support the partnership with Coca-Cola Co. and similar corporations.

Aside from the fervent debates in the student congress, one of the most impactful aspects of the national conference was the sheer number and variety of family medicine residency programs and residents in attendance. The residency fair provided opportunity for students to mingle with hundreds of program representatives, residents, and family physicians. I was truly energized by the residency fair as I explored the huge variety of programs and personalities at the fair. As I made my way from booth to booth, it quickly became evident that the diversity of opportunities in family medicine is endless. Simply, if you haven't been to the AAFP National Conference, take a trip to Kansas City and enjoy the company thousands of the friendliest students, residents, and physicians in health care!

Finally, here is a list of the Student Congress Resolutions and the actions taken on each.

**Resolution No. S1-100 Establish a Single Payer Task Force**

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians establish, through its Commission on Governmental Advocacy, a voluntary task force of physicians, residents and students to evaluate the benefits to patients, families, and the United States population of implementing a national single payer healthcare system and make public its findings by July 2012.

**Adopted**

**Substitute Resolution No. S1-101 Development and Marketing of Family Medicine Shelf Review Online Application**

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians explore the development of resources, including an online application (app), targeting medical students for the Family Medicine Shelf Exam by selling the application (app) for a modest cost.

**Adopted**

**Resolution No. S1-102 Declaration of Support for Four-Year Family Medicine Residency**

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians support the establishment of family medicine as a four-year residency program.

**Not Adopted**

**Resolution No. S1-103 2012 Conference Curriculum Recommendation**

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) explore curricular content for the 2012 AAFP National Conference of Family Medicine Residents and Medical Students that would address the inclusion of transient populations in the Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) model, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) explore curricular content for the 2012 AAFP National Conference of Family Medicine Residents and Medical Students that would address the meaningful use of the electronic health record (EHR) in improving continuity of care for such transient populations as the homeless, migrant workers, and other underserved mobile populations.

**Adopted**

**Resolution No. S1-104 Changing the Title of National Conference Chair**

RESOLVED, That the title of both Student and Resident Chairs of the National Conference be changed from chair to Resident and Student Speaker effective for the 2012 National Conference.

**Not Adopted**

**Resolution No. S1-105 History Taking Recommendation Regarding Drugs and Intoxicating Behaviors**

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) create a policy statement in support of encouraging family physicians when taking a medical history to include the question "Do you do anything to get high?" with the common screening question of "Do you use any illegal drugs?"

**Adopted as Amended**

**Resolution No. S1-106 Support for the National Health Care Workforce Commission**

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians support fully funding the National Health Care Workforce Commission.

**Reaffirmation Calendar**

**Resolution No. S1-107 American Academy of Family Physicians Representation in the Relative Value Scale Update Committee**

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) formally withdraw its representation in the Relative Value Scale Update Committee (RUC) if the RUC does not implement all the recommendations contained within the AAFP's June 10, 2011 letter to the RUC by March 1, 2012.

## **Not Adopted**

### **Substitute Resolution No. S1-108 Importance of Obstetrics Training in Family Medicine**

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians advocate to ensure the preservation of obstetrical/perinatal care in the graduate medical education of family medicine residents.

**Adopted**

### **Substitute Resolution No. S1-109 Student Work Hours**

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians investigate medical student work hour policies across medical schools, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the American Academy of Family Physicians survey and report medical students' opinions on medical student work hours.

**Adopted**

### **Substitute Resolution No. S1-110 Increasing Student and Political Advocacy**

RESOLVED, That the Family Medicine Interest Group (FMIG) National Coordinator investigate ways to make the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) NEWS NOW and AAFP Connect for Family Medicine more accessible to medical students, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Virtual Family Medicine Interest Group (FMIG) Website include sign-up links to the AAFP NEWS NOW and Connect for Family Medicine on its main page.

**Adopted**

### **Substitute Resolution No. S2-200 Support of the Reach Out and Read® Program by the American Academy of Family Physicians**

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians endorse the Reach Out and Read® Program.

**Adopted**

### **Substitute Resolution No. S2-201 Encouraging the Fast Food Industry to End Marketing to Children**

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians encourage the fast food industry to retire marketing promotions to children, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians encourage the fast food industry to broaden the definition of "child-targeted" marketing to include TV ads and other forms of marketing viewed by large numbers of children, but not exclusively targeted to them.

**Adopted**

### **Substitute Resolution No. S2-202 Pharmacy Vaccine Policy Recommendations**

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) support research into the populations receiving vaccines from pharmacies in order to make more definitive AAFP policy on the issue, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) work with pharmacy boards to provide specific recommendations for pharmacies that do provide vaccines, including:

- require communication of vaccinations to a patient's primary care physician
- attend formal vaccine training
- add a requirement to enter vaccines given into state databases, if applicable.

**Adopted**

### **Resolution No. S2-203 Development of a Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Introductory Program/Lecture for Residents and Students**

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians explore the development of an introductory program/lecture for Maintenance of Certification (MOC) to be presented at the National Conference of Family Medicine Residents and Medical Students to better prepare both students and residents for the evolving changes and requirements for MOC.

**Adopted**

**Resolution No. S2-204 Integration of Practice Management and Business Principles in Medical Student Education**

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) create a policy statement promoting the inclusion of principles of practice management, health policy, and basic business principles in medical student education.

**Adopted**

**Substitute Resolution No. S2-205 Declaration of Support for Planned Parenthood**

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians support continued government funding of preventive health care services provided by organizations or companies like Planned Parenthood.

**Adopted**

**Substitute Resolution No. S2-206 National Prescription Drug Database**

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) urge the Office for Civil Rights of the Department of Health and Human Services to create a national, comprehensive prescription drug database, searchable by specific patient identifiers across state lines without violating the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), which may be accessed by providers for meaningful use.

**Adopted**

**Substitute Resolution No. S2-207 Support for Abortion Access**

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) support access to, but not requirement of, abortion training as a component of family medicine graduate medical education.

**Adopted as Amended**

**Resolution No. S2-208 Resident Duty Hours Guideline Review**

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians investigate the impact of the recent duty hour changes on the quality of graduate medical education, as assessed by family medicine residents, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians investigate the impact of the recent duty hour changes on the viability of small and rural family medicine residency programs.

**Adopted**

**Resolution No. S2-209 Credentialing of Family Physicians for Colon Cancer Screening**

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians support and promote colonoscopy training in family medicine residency programs, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians advocate for the credentialing of family physicians to perform colonoscopy procedures.

**Adopted**

**Resolution No. S2-210 The American Academy of Family Physicians Alliance With Coca-Cola**

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) elect not to renew the collaboration with Coca-Cola, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) consult state chapters before initiating new contractual relationships with corporations.

**Adopted**