Policy Priorities

The Board of Directors has approved the Academy’s **2019-2020 Policy Priorities**:

- Advance Health Equity and Champion Wellness;
- Promote Innovation and Sustainability;
- Reduce Patient, Provider, and System Burden.

From policy makers to the public, our goal is to share these overarching priorities with those that seek to learn more about the Academy, help advance strong partnerships, and increase the impact we make in the health policy landscape.

Additional Actions

- **April 15**: The Academy sent a press release on the new policy brief, "*Pregnant and Parenting Women with a Substance Use Disorder: Actions and Policy for Enduring Therapeutic Practice.*" Read the press release here.
- **April 1**: The Academy submitted comments to the Pain Management Best Practices Inter-Agency Task Force in response to its Draft Report on Pain Management Best Practices: Updates, Gaps, Inconsistencies, and Recommendations. The Academy offered comments on where the report could be more inclusive of the whole healthcare team and urged for the Task Force's report to incorporate the unique care nurses and APRNs provide. Read the comments here.
- **March 27**: The Academy sent a letter to Representative David Cicilline (D-RI) in support of the Equality Act (H.R. 5). This legislation, which has 240 bipartisan...
cosponsors, is an important step towards eliminating discrimination based on one's sex, including their sexual orientation or gender identity, and towards health equity. Read the letter here.

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**Administration Activities**

**Around the Administration**

**Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)**

- **U.S. Preventative Services Task Force (USPSTF) Nominations (Open Until May 15)**
  - USPSTF works to improve the health of all Americans by making evidence-based recommendations about the effectiveness of clinical preventive services and health promotion.

**Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)**

- **March 28: New Part D Policies Address Opioid Epidemic**
  - CMS has introduced new Medicare Part D opioid safety policies to reduce prescription opioid misuse while preserving medically necessary access to these medications. These policies include improved safety alerts at the pharmacy for Part D beneficiaries.

**Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)**

- **Opioid Workforce Expansion Program (due May 7, 2019)**
  - HRSA is now accepting applications for the FY 2019 Opioid Workforce Expansion Program (OWEP) funding opportunities. OWEP's purpose is to build upon existing HRSA investments to enhance community-based experiential training focused on opioid and other substance use disorders.
  - FY 2019 funding for OWEP for professionals is $39.3 million for approximately 29 awards and OWEP for paraprofessionals is $29.8 million for approximately 33 awards.

**National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine**

- **Report: Medications for Opioid Use Disorder Save Lives**
  - The National Institute on Drug Abuse and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration recently co-sponsored a survey conducted by the National Academies to assess the state of the evidence for medication treatment of opioid use disorder.
- **Report: The Role of Nonpharmacological Approaches to Pain Management: Proceedings of a Workshop**
  - On December 4-5, 2018 the Forum on Neuroscience and Nervous System Disorders and Global Forum on Innovation in Health Professional Education
hosted a public workshop to discuss nonpharmological treatments and integrative health models for pain management, and their role within the broad landscape of approaches to chronic pain management.

From the Federal Register

Proposed Rules

- **CMS, HHS:** Medicare, Medicaid, and Children's Health Insurance Programs; Program Integrity Enhancements to the Provider Enrollment Process; Extension of Timeline for Publication of the Final Rule
  
  This announces the extension of the timeline for publication on a final rule that requires Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP providers and suppliers to disclose certain current and previous affiliations with other providers and suppliers. This would in turn eliminate significant program integrity loopholes and help deter ongoing fraudulent and abusive behavior.

- **FDA, HHS:** Mammography Quality Standards Act
  
  This proposed rule would update and modernize current mammography regulations to improve the delivery of mammography services as well as the communication of healthcare information.

Agency Activities

**Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC)**

- **March 15:** *Report to the Congress: Medicare Payment Policy*
  
  This report includes MedPAC’s analysis of payment adequacy in fee-for-service Medicare and reviews the status of Medicare Advantage as well as the prescription drug benefit, Part D.
  
  MedPAC also recommends that Congress replace the four current hospital quality payment programs with a single streamlined program, the hospital value incentive program (HVIP).
  
  The report also includes information on incentives for prescribing opioid and non-opioid pain treatment under Medicare’s hospital inpatient and outpatient payment systems.

- **April 4-5:** MedPAC’s April Public Meeting

Congressional Hearings
Based on previous positions taken by the Academy, the following scan is meant for informational purposes and does not directly translate to Academy endorsement. Links provided allow you to watch the recordings and read witness testimony.

**House Appropriations**

- April 2: National Institutes of Health Budget Request for FY 2020
- April 9: Indian Health Service Budget Request for FY 2020
- April 9: Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Public Witness Day

**House Education & Labor**

- March 26: Strengthening Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect
- April 2: Examining Surprise Billing: Protecting Patients from Financial Pain
- April 9: The Equality Act (H.R. 5): Ensuring the Right to Learn and Work Free from Discrimination

**House Energy & Commerce**

- April 2: Priced Out of a Lifesaving Drug: The Human Impact of Rising Insulin Costs
- April 10: Priced Out of a Lifesaving Drug: Getting Answers on the Rising Cost of Insulin

**Senate Appropriations**

- April 3: Subcommittee Hearing: Review of the FY 2020 Budget Request for the Defense Health Program
- April 4: Subcommittee Hearing: Review of the FY 2020 Budget Request for the U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services
- April 11: Subcommittee Hearing: Review of the FY 2020 Budget Request for NIH

**Senate HELP**

- March 26: Implementing the 21st Century Cures Act: Making Electronic Health Information Available to Patients and Providers
- April 2: Reauthorizing HEA: Addressing Campus Sexual Assault and Ensuring Student Safety and Rights

**Senate Finance**

- April 9: Drug Pricing in America: A Prescription for Change, Part III

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**Legislative Schedule**

The House will be in a District Work Period from April 15-April 26.
The House will be back in session on April 29.

The Senate will be in a District Work Period from April 15-April 26.
The Senate will be back in session on April 29.