

CoPS Advocacy Task Force
Telephone Conference Call 9/4/08

Potential areas for advocacy activity

- NIH funding
- Pay for performance issues
- The dwindling mass of physician-scientists in pediatrics; relationship to recent APM and CTSA initiatives
- How subspecialty organizations that already have advocacy programs can mentor others to get them started and obtain leverage.
- Subspecialty representation on the Advisory Committee of the National Children's Study
- Off-label prescribing and the effect of black-box warning labels
- Disparity in health insurance funding for mental-health care and pediatric subspecialty care?

Criteria for evaluating/prioritizing issues

What issues can help us learn about ourselves and bring our organization together?

What issues will motivate people to participate in the discussion and response?

What are the most compelling issues from a point of view of achieving our stated mission(s)?

What issues represent "low-hanging fruit" that we can address or easily align with other organizations to address?

Examples of how subspecialties currently are advocates

Psychiatry – largely through AAP, related to psychopharmacology (Black Box warnings may be leading to underutilization of medications)

Developmental/behavioral – similar concerns, partnering through AAP. Also concerned re: disparities in mental health insurance

Pulmonary – largely through Cystic Fibrosis Foundation; nothing formally as a general pulmonary group

Nephrology – paid Washington representative, regular visits to Congress and NIH, advocacy with other nephrology-related organizations. Higher dues because of it, but has been a big help regarding reimbursement and developing NIH-funded multicenter trials and databases.

Possible primary issue to address

All participants on the phone call felt workforce issue is of greatest importance. Loan repayment program is of some help, but not enough. ABP and AMSPDC are interested and advocating as well.

Questions for the CoPS representatives

We felt it would be helpful to ask all of the representatives to do some advance thinking before coming to the meeting so we could jump-start our advocacy activities. Here are some questions that we would like to ask everyone to prepare to answer to, the extent possible, before the meeting.

1. Is your subspecialty conducting organized advocacy activities? Who in the subspecialty is doing this? Do you have a Washington representative? Are you partnering with other organizations? If so, with whom (e.g., AAP)?

2. Is your subspecialty encountering workforce concerns? If so, have you taken any active steps to attempt to address the problem?
3. Are you encountering problems with the need for off-label prescribing? Are the efforts to obtain pediatric data sufficient?
4. Are there people in your subspecialty who might prove helpful on the National Children's Study Advisory Board?
5. Does your subspecialty face significant disparities in the Medicaid reimbursement rates in your state?