

Updated resource guide for internists released by ACP

September 21 2010

An updated practical resource guide for internists on the health care reform law adopted last March 23, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), was released today by the American College of Physicians (ACP). An Internist's Practical Guide to Understanding Health System Reform was developed by ACP's Division of Governmental Affairs and Public Policy, a significant player in helping to shape the health care reform law.

"This 109-page document features the 'nuts and bolts' of the key provisions in the PPACA that we believe will be of particular interest to internists and their patients," noted J. Fred Ralston, Jr., MD, FACP, president of the American College of Physicians. "It is designed to be super-easy to use, with hyperlinks that will allow readers to access and print explanations of key provisions of the law. It is organized by the effective dates and subject matter."

Although emphasizing topics of particular interest to ACP members, the guide provides practical information intended to be useful to many others, including physicians in other specialties, consumers, and policy analysts. ACP is making the guide broadly available to the public for free download, and has authorized redistribution of its contents by non-profit groups with attribution to ACP.

The update is provided nearly three months after the initial release of the guide in order to reflect details that have been determined by various agencies. The update also includes information on seven topics -

including ACOs, bundled payments, and health plan administrative simplification - not previously covered but shown to be of interest based on questions and interest by internists and their patients.

The Internist's Guide features a two-page table of contents with hyperlinks that take viewers directly to provisions within the guide. They can access areas of interest by placing the cursor over given provisions in the table of contents, and clicking with the mouse. The document also is in a "searchable" format, which allows viewers to search for items of interest using key words and phrases.

As a living document, the guide will continue to be updated by ACP as developments occur and questions about the law are raised and answered.

The "Summary of Key Health System Reforms Affecting Patients" is a single page of key provisions affecting patients that is written in language that is intended to be understandable by most of the general public. Physicians are told that they may wish to print the one-page summary and make it available to help answer patient questions.

The "Summary of Key Provisions of Health System Reform Affecting Internists" provides a more in-depth examination of the coverage, workforce, payment and delivery reforms, and other elements of the legislation. The four-page document is something interested physicians may also want to have for reference to answer their own, their patients', or their colleagues' questions.

The summaries precede more than 100 pages of Q & A covering years 2010 to 2016 and beyond when various parts of the legislation take effect.

"Polls show that much of the public is confused about the new law, but

that they also place more trust in their physicians on health reform than anyone else," Dr. Ralston pointed out. "An Internist's Practical Guide to Understanding Health System Reform addresses the critical need for physicians to have accurate, practical information on the law from reliable sources."

"Whether internists agree with the health reform law or not," Dr. Ralston added "I think most will agree that An Internist's Practical Guide to Understanding [Health System Reform](#) is the single most comprehensive, clear, and objective explanation of the new law, and what it might mean for internists and their patients."

More information: www.acponline.org/

Provided by American College of Physicians

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