ACPE Supports Newly Released Patient Safety Strategies

The American College of Physician Executives (ACPE) today announced its support for research identifying the top 10 patient safety strategies that can be implemented immediately by hospitals.

The research, conducted by RAND Corp. and supported by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), was published Monday in the Annals of Internal Medicine. For more than four years, researchers looked at threats to patient harm, determined how they could be measured, and searched for solutions. Among their findings was a need for greater physician leadership in the implementation of the patient safety strategies.

ACPE, representing more than 11,000 physician leaders, agrees that physician support of patient safety strategies is critical. Physicians, when presented with evidence-based data supporting specific patient safety efforts, are the champions who can lead health care teams to enact the procedures necessary for a successful patient safety effort.

"More than a decade after the epiphany obtained with the IOM reports, our health care industry continues to look for ways to improve safety, quality and efficiency," said Peter Angood, MD, CEO of ACPE. "This new RAND report provides critically important recommendations that will help boost the momentum for augmenting necessary and needed improvements in health care."

As an organization devoted to improving health care through the empowerment of physician leaders, ACPE has already embraced many of the ideas described in the research. While it is true in the past that physicians have been reluctant to support checklists, treatment protocols and bundles, ACPE encourages and educates our physician members to adopt these innovative approaches to patient care.

The groundbreaking work by the RAND research group aligns well with the nine essential elements that ACPE believes are necessary for successful health care reform. Health care must be:

- Quality-centered
- Safe for all
- Streamlined and efficient

- Measurement-based
- Evidence-based
- Value-driven
- Innovative
- Fair and equitable
- Physician-led

The current climate of excessive costs and unreliable outcomes present in health care today is clearly unacceptable. The nation will never achieve long-term, meaningful change if the culture of safety is not strengthened. ACPE stands ready to assist with the implementation of the patient safety strategies promoted by the RAND research group and look forward to positive results from these well-reasoned and forward-thinking efforts.

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