

Media Contact:

Leah Taylor
917.595.3062

ltaylor@cooperkatz.com



The Physicians Foundation Releases “Roadmap for Physicians to Health Care Reform”

Important new tool for physicians will help them understand major legislative changes that will impact their practice of medicine

Boston, MA, June 1, 2011—A comprehensive report released today offers private practice physicians an important new tool for understanding how legislative changes may impact their practice of medicine. Issued by [The Physicians Foundation](#), a nonprofit organization that seeks to advance the work of practicing physicians and improve the quality of health care for all Americans, the report examines the provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) and how these provisions will directly impact private practice physicians, both immediately and over the coming months.

Titled “A Roadmap for Physicians to Health Care Reform,” the report provides physicians with an in-depth perspective on the issues – both societal and economic – that are influencing current reform efforts, as well as insight into the 112th Congress and their possible “reform of the reform.” It also focuses on the major legislative changes that hold the most significance to the daily practice of medicine, such as changes in payment systems, quality reporting, shared savings programs, workforce and rural initiatives, and select aspects of the changes reshaping the private health insurance market.

“Physicians bring an essential perspective on how the health care system can and should support optimal patient care. Therefore, it is vital that this community understand which aspects of health reform will be most meaningful over time due to their impact on the practice of medicine,” said Lou Goodman, Ph.D., president of The Physicians Foundation and chief executive officer of the [Texas Medical Association](#). “We believe that no matter what actions Congress takes to amend the ACA, the most direct provisions affecting physicians will endure in some form. The Physicians Foundation commissioned this Roadmap in order to educate physicians on these core elements, as well as to promote broader understanding of how private practice physicians will be impacted.”

A few of the broad shifts that these health care changes represent, as highlighted in the Roadmap, include:

- Physicians will assume greater responsibility for the health of populations, not individuals
- Significant numbers of physicians may feel compelled to relinquish private practice autonomy in favor of networks or group formations
- Physicians will increasingly lose the “private” in private practice
- Physicians could become a link for risk-bearing arrangements, thereby assuming significant shared financial risks and quasi-insurance roles

The Roadmap, which was developed by [Bostrom](#) and Old Creek Consulting on behalf of The Foundation, provides valuable information on select delivery systems and payment provisions that will fundamentally alter how physicians organize, practice, and deliver care in the future. Some of these provisions have clear and direct consequences, such as changes to physician reimbursement and the adoption of electronic medical records. Other provisions create new structures and entities, like the [CMS Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation](#), the Independent Payment Advisory Board, and the [Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute](#). Others lay a foundation for alternatives to traditional fee-for-service payment, such as the National Pilot Program on Payment Bundling and the shared savings program (including the much-discussed accountable care organization, or ACO model).

“Proposed changes to delivery and payments systems, in particular, have significant implications for physicians, including the potential to impose considerable compliance burdens,” said Dr. Walker Ray, Vice President of The Physicians Foundation and Chair of the Research Committee. “Our hope is that this Roadmap will clarify any confusion while also focusing on the most essential and immediate issues doctors face.”

The full research report is available for download on The Physicians Foundation website at: <http://www.physiciansfoundation.org/FoundationReportDetails.aspx?id=288>.

About The Physicians Foundation

The Physicians Foundation is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that seeks to advance the work of practicing physicians and to improve the quality of healthcare for all Americans. It pursues its mission through a variety of activities including grantmaking, research and policy impact studies. Since 2005, The Foundation has awarded numerous multi-year grants totaling more than \$28 million. In addition, The Foundation focuses on the following core areas: health system reform, health information technology, physician leadership, workforce needs and pilot projects. As the health system in America continues to evolve, The Physicians Foundation is steadfast in its determination to foster the physician / patient relationship and assist physicians in sustaining their medical practices during this evolution. Additional information about The Physicians Foundation is available online at www.physiciansfoundation.org.

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