

The American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine engages in public policy advocacy to advance the field, promote the interests of palliative care and hospice patients, and support the health professionals who care for them. The needs of patients and their families throughout the care continuum guide AAHPM's policy agenda. The following priorities are intended to help direct the Academy's efforts and resources, including collaboration with outside entities.

A just, effective and efficient system of health care requires palliative care as a key component. In order to achieve this aim, the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine will focus its advocacy efforts on:

Developing a robust, diverse, well-trained, sustainable hospice and palliative care workforce to ensure access to consistent, high-quality, equitable care for the expanding and diverse population of patients with multiple chronic conditions or life-threatening or serious illness, as well as their families and caregivers.

Preserving and expanding timely access to hospice and palliative care that offers high-value services aligned with patient and family goals in all settings and geographies, including by urging permanent telehealth policy, seeking sustainable reimbursement for clinicians and physician-led interprofessional teams, and informing the development of new payment and delivery models.

Increasing funding for hospice and palliative care research – particularly that focuses on historically marginalized groups – and ensuring a sustainable infrastructure for developing the evidence base necessary to strengthen clinical practice and improve healthcare delivery and outcomes for all patients living with multiple chronic conditions or life-threatening or serious illness, as well as their families and caregivers.

Ensuring comprehensive, timely access to and effective management of prescription medications and multimodal pain and symptom treatment for patients with medically appropriate, evidence-based indications while recognizing the public health imperative to mitigate prescription drug misuse and diversion by collaborating with professional, regulatory and industry stakeholders to maximize individual and public safety and minimize undue prescriber burden.

Promoting palliative care in national quality measurement and performance improvement strategies to ensure a focus on high-value patient- and family-centered outcomes across the continuum of care, including promoting the development and use of meaningful metrics and benchmarks for quality reporting and value-based reimbursement.

Strengthening hospice care to ensure patients near the end of life and their families and caregivers receive timely and equitable access to high-quality services and supports across all geographies and communities, including by promoting reforms that improve program integrity, optimize the experience of care, and support the free exercise of reasonable independent judgment in clinical decisions made in good faith, including certification of terminal illness.

Advancing health equity to ensure all individuals have access to equitable health care and coverage, including by considering the impact and unintended consequences of public policies and supporting investment in efforts to understand and address social and physical determinants of health, ameliorate health disparities, and ensure quality of care for minoritized, underserved, and under-resourced communities.

—Approved by the Board of Directors March 2024

