

AAP cares about all children, all pediatricians

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As the nation comes together following an embattled election – and a historically volatile and negative campaign, I remind myself that the AAP is non-partisan but unabashedly pro-children and families.

Whatever the future holds, the AAP and its member pediatricians will be there working with the Trump administration to help children and support pediatricians. I hope you've all read our *Blueprint for Children: How the Next President Can Build a Foundation for a Healthy Future*. There's a lot at stake for children and families, and our Blueprint for Children is our way forward. The Blueprint lays out an administrative and legislative agenda for all children — rich or poor — as well as for the needs of pediatricians. It's already being used by government agencies to prepare their transition plans, and it will be our roadmap for advocacy in the coming years.

Whatever the future holds, the AAP will care about *all* children. This year has seen a redoubling of our efforts to help poor children and families, starting with release of our policy statement *Poverty and Child Health in the United States*. This year also has seen the Academy's valiant efforts to help immigrant children, especially those escaping the carnage of Central America with their families or as unaccompanied minors. This year has seen a more specific focus on transgender children and youths, defending their rights in schools and thinking about how pediatricians can best support their right to be whoever they want to be. This year has seen a continuation of our efforts globally to help babies survive and thrive as well as a special focus on the children of Puerto Rico and the impact of Zika. Indeed, we care about *all* children!

Whatever the future holds, the AAP will care about *all* pediatricians. I sometimes hear from members that they applaud our efforts for children but wish we did more for pediatricians. I reject that false dichotomy. What is good for children, like reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program and Medicaid expansion to improve access, also is good for pediatricians. And what is good for pediatricians, like better payments from all insurers so they can continue to see all children and provide them high-quality care, is essential for children.

Our recent statements on vaccine hesitancy and vaccine non-medical exemptions clearly are in support of pediatricians but also are efforts to keep children protected. I suspect we don't communicate well all that we are doing for pediatricians, such as advocating for:

- payments for various billing codes,
- changes in the Maintenance of Certification process requested by our members,
- pediatric-friendly electronic health records, and
- inclusion of pediatrics front and center in the transformations in health care.

We're not always successful, but we are determined in these efforts. We focus on our members in private practice and those who are employed, on our early career members and our seniors, on our generalists and subspecialists. Indeed, we care about *all* pediatricians.

Whatever the future holds, we'll remain constant in our pursuit of our mission and look to the future of our organization. This year, the Board of Directors and Executive Committee are developing a strategic plan for the AAP. The plan will include a focus on physician wellness and on leadership training for pediatricians at every level of career. And we will have a strategy that will transform our organization from digitized paper to truly digital. We are committed to strengthening our chapters. The AAP needs to thrive and flourish if it is going to be there for children and for pediatricians in the changing health care and federal government environment.

In closing, I want to thank you for your friendship and support. I very much believe in servant leadership and have tried to lead the AAP in that manner. It has been my great privilege to serve you. For those who feel less than well-served, I ask for your understanding. For those who do feel well-served, let me say that it was really *you*, not I, who accomplished it all.

Let us go forward together, strong and determined in our love of children. Remember it is all about *all* the children.

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