



Getting Started:

Directions for the New Family Physician



LOUISIANA ACADEMY OF
FAMILY PHYSICIANS

STRONG MEDICINE FOR LOUISIANA

The New Physician Toolkit

Being a New Family Physician is a new and exciting time in your life. Finding your way in a new practice environment takes time and expertise in areas you may not be familiar with yet.

The **Louisiana Academy of Family Physicians (LAFP)** is here to supply you with information, resources and support while you begin your new practice. The New Physician Toolkit will provide you with information essential in starting a new medical practice.

The LAFP Mission

The *mission* of the Louisiana Academy of Family Physicians is to promote and support Louisiana's family physicians in providing excellent health care and to provide its members with continuing medical education opportunities. LAFP serves the family medicine community and provides a **unified voice for Family Medicine**.

For more information about the benefits of membership or details on how to obtain an application for membership, please visit our website: www.lafp.org



**“I love the challenge of family medicine.
I never know what I am going to see in a given day...”**

Marguerite “Cissy” Picou, MD, FAAFP
Member since 1987

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Overview of the LAFP

Welcome to the LAFP– *Strong Medicine for Louisiana*

The Louisiana Academy of Family Physicians (LAFP) is one of the state's largest medical specialty organization, with more than 1,500 member physicians, residents and medical students throughout the state. The LAFP serves the Family Medicine community and provides a unified voice for Family Medicine.

LAFP is governed by a board of directors, comprised of LAFP members from throughout the state. The board establishes and reviews Academy policies and plans during the LAFP quarterly board meetings and the General Members Assembly Meeting. Members also serve on LAFP Committees where they study, analyze and make informed policy recommendations to the Board of Directors.

Major purposes of the Academy include:

- Advocating for family physicians to lawmakers, organized medicine and the public;
- Providing high-quality continuing medical education to physicians in Louisiana;
- Keeping members informed of changes in health care; and
- Nurturing the next generation of family physicians.

LAFP tracks and lobbies for legislation impacting family physicians and their patients. The [Louisiana Academy of Family Physicians Political Action Committee](#) (LaFamPac), the political voice of family medicine in Louisiana, speaks on behalf of Louisiana family physicians and their patients through grassroots involvement, personal relationships with elected officials and political campaign participation and contributions. LaFamPac is a non-partisan political action committee that supports candidates who support issues important to family physicians and their patients.

The Academy wishes to equip family physicians with beneficial tools for the continual improvement of the specialty. To do this, LAFP promotes the constant education of members to assist them with meeting the required 150 hours of approved continuing education every three years to retain membership. This requirement may be met through [continuing education programs](#). LAFP offers many versatile educational accredited programs throughout the year.

LAFP communicates to its members through its up-to-date website that contains information about CME activities, legislative issues, current medical news and other helpful resources. The Academy publishes a quarterly magazine, the [Louisiana Family Doctor](#), and several other smaller publications throughout the year. Members also receive the [Weekly Family Medicine Update](#), which is a weekly electronic newsletter sent every Tuesday.



“Things I wish I would have Known...”

-Jason Fuqua, MD
LAFP New Physician Representative



As a recent residency graduate and first-time practice owner, I was asked by the staff at the LAFP to put together a little list of things I wish I would have known before starting my medical practice.

After thinking on it a while, and also asking a few opinions, I was able to put this list together:

1. **Coding:** This is probably the one area that can make or cost you more money than you realize. Get ahead of the game and start working on coding and documenting for billing purposes. There are also modifiers that can get you the compensation you deserve. No matter what you think of the system we practice in, it's what pays the bills and we don't want to leave money on the table.
2. **Contracts:** Know the language in the contract. Have a lawyer and an accountant (both familiar with medical contracts) look over the contract. Remember that contracts have to work two ways—both you and your employer/hospital have to be happy with the language. And while we are talking about that, know what the tax implications of loan forgiveness/salary guarantee are (hint—you get taxed on it at some point) because the language dictates this.
3. **Partnerships:** Don't just sign off on joining a practice. Make sure you go through and do your research on the doctor(s) in the practice. What is the payer mix? What are the most common complaints (ie: Does one doctor practice in areas you are not comfortable working in, like pain management, OB)—remember that patient seeing this physician will expect you to practice the same way.
4. **Patience:** Remember that when you first start out, it will take a while to build up your patient base. Don't settle or sell your ethics short to get an extra patient or two. Your practice will be what you make it, so make it a good one.
5. **Insurance:** Make sure you start enrolling in insurance plans as soon as you know where you will be. It can take several months to get on plans, and you don't always get to retroactively collect for patients you saw while you were waiting to get approval.
6. **Business:** I don't know about you, but I didn't go to business school. Surround yourself with people that understand the business of healthcare. This is especially important with the changing landscape of today's healthcare climate.
7. **Mentors:** Find out who in your area you can ask for advice. Don't be afraid to ask those who have been there before you. We all got a really good training in our residency—however, that only lasts for three years and there is a lot of stuff we don't see while we are there. (tip: the LAFP has a mentorship program)
8. **Referral Base:** Get to know your specialist. There is a reason that a lot of grads stay in the same area they trained. If you relocate, go on a meet-and-greet of the guys you will be sending referrals to—they will send some your way as well!!!
9. **Medical Records:** Get to know the system you will be working on. Remember that the trend is toward EMR, for better or for worse. If you are joining an existing venture that has EMR, make sure you like it. If you are planning to start out on EMR, start looking for the one that works best for you—they are not all created equal.
10. **Balance:** Take time to have a life outside of medicine. This is your career, and it is real easy to let it consume you when you start out. Take time out for yourself, it will help you and your patients in the long run.

Good luck during this process.

Remember that there are organizations like the

LAFP out there that are here to help you.

Start from the beginning....



Obtain License

The Louisiana Board of Medical Examiners (LSBME) is responsible for determining qualifications of applicants for licensure, enforcing the medical practice act through the rule making process and also renewal of licenses to practice. The application process generally takes around 90 days from the time the LSBME receives the completed application. For more information on licensure, go to the LSBME website www.lsbme.louisiana.gov.

Register with DEA/CDS Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA)

To legally prescribe controlled substance, you must register with the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). This process may take several months. For more information about DEA and how to register go the [DEA website](#) or call (800) 882-9539.

To contact your local DEA office:

New Orleans Division
3838 North Causeway Blvd., Ste 1800
Lakeway III
Metairie, LA 70002
(504) 840-1076
Registration Number:
(888) 514-7302 or (888) 514-8051

- You must obtain a DEA Number, issued by the US Department of Justice. It must appear on all prescriptions. If you move, a new number is required
- Drug thefts and patients seeking restricted drugs under false pretenses must be reported to DEA.
- Prescription pads for controlled substances may be ordered from any one of many approved printers. Written prescriptions for controlled substances must be on a tamper-resistant security prescription forms that have been preprinted by a Board-approved printer and must contain specific elements. For a list of approved security prescription vendors, go to the [Louisiana State Board of Pharmacy](#) website.
- Physicians may prescribe drugs only in the regular practice of their profession and may not prescribe controlled substance to patients not under their care.

Controlled Dangerous Substances (CDS)

In Louisiana, you are required to register with the DEA and CDS. The Controlled Dangerous Substances (CDS) license is the state's authority to work with controlled substances. You must possess both licenses to manufacture, distribute, procure, possess, prescribe, dispense, or conduct research with controlled substances.

To apply for a CDS license visit the Board of Pharmacy's website at www.pharmacy.la.gov. The vertical menu board on the left side of the home page has further information and process directions.

Professional Liability Coverage

Most hospitals and managed care organizations will require you to have some type of professional liability coverage. You will need adequate coverage before seeing your first patient. A good resource for you to examine is the Louisiana Department of Insurance. The LAFP recommends contacting a physician owned malpractice insurance company, to name a few:

LAMMICO

www.lammico.com
(800) 452-2120

The Physicians Trust

thephysicianstrust.com
(225) 368-3888

There are many options when it comes to policy types, so you need to consider which type best fits your circumstances. You may want to seek referrals from other physicians in your area. The AAFP provides you with more ways to protect yourself with the [right malpractice insurance policy](#).





Start from the beginning....

Managed Care Organizations

Managed care has become the predominant health insurance in the United States with nearly 90 percent of Americans covered by a type of managed care plan. The Managed care organizations (MCOs) integrate the delivery of care with financing of care by contracting with physicians, hospitals, and other health care providers.

The AAFP has several resources to help you make the transition from residency to practice, including:

- Principles of Interaction Between Family Physicians and Health Plans and Patient-Centered Formularies
- Managed Care Contract Negotiation
- AAFP Guidelines for Interaction in “Hospitalist” Models

Credentialing

The process of provider credentialing should begin as soon as you know which managed care organizations your practice will use. You need to allow yourself ample time to become credentialed, as the process can take up to six months to complete. Be sure to have your state medical license and/or proof of potential liability coverage before applying for credentials. As a new physician, there are often problems associated with obtaining your credentials. However, there are ways to reduce those problems.

You can check with your employer or practice manager to see if your MCO(s) subscribe to the Universal Credentialing Affordable Quality Healthcare (CAQH). The CAQH offers a single national process that eliminates the need for multiple credentialing applications.

Visit the [Universal Credentialing Data Source](#) to find out more information. This may be an option for you.

Hospital Privileges

Once you have determined the hospitals you would like to be affiliated, you will need to apply to the medical staff office at the hospital. Obtain an application for medical staff membership and privileges from the office as soon as possible, it often takes three to six months for privileges to be granted. Be prepared to provide documentation from your residency training.

Remember to keep all written documentation from your residency training regarding any and all procedures you have performed, especially gastrointestinal and obstetrical procedures. Many staff applications require specific information. The AAFP can provide you with some privileging policies information and well as other privileging resources.



Start from the beginning....



Federal Programs

Federal health insurance programs will constantly appear throughout your career.

It is important to become familiar with these programs and the policies associated with each program. For specific information on Medicare, Medicaid, and the Children's Health Insurance Program, visit the [Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services](#).

Here are a few of Louisiana's assisted health insurance polices:

Medicare Recipients (65 year of age and older)	Medicare Savings Program (898) 544-7996
Workers with Disabilities	Medicaid Purchase Plan (225) 522-4254
Long Term Care	Louisiana Medicaid Long Term Care (888) 342-6207
Uninsured/underinsured children with disabilities in families with too much income to qualify for Regular Medicaid of LaChip	Family Opportunity Act Medicaid (888) 342-6207
Individuals who are disabled, blind, very low-income parents of children under 19.	General Medicaid Program (888) 342-6207
Children under the age of 19	LaChip (Louisiana Children's Health Insurance Program) (877) 252-2447

For more resources and information on federal programs, please visit these websites:

[Louisiana Medicare](#)- Louisiana Medicare is a federal program that provides insurance to people who are 65 years of age and above. Some people with permanent disabilities and chronic renal diseases may also be eligible.

[Louisiana Medicaid](#)- Louisiana's Medicaid Program provides medical coverage for needy Louisiana residents who qualify.

[Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals](#)- The mission of the Department of Health and Hospitals is to protect and promote health and to ensure access to medical, preventive and rehabilitative services for all citizens of the State of Louisiana. DHH also regulates the Medicaid services for the state of Louisiana.

Practice Settings

As a family physician, you will have the flexibility to shape your career in order to take advantage of your knowledge and unique interest. In addition to patient care, we have many members also involved in research, public health, education and administrative roles!

There are many practice setting options. Here are some of the dynamics of each option for you to consider. Make the right choice for you!

<p>Solo Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control and autonomy • Ability to set own schedule • Significant administrative and managerial responsibilities • Responsibility for start-up and over head costs 	<p>State and Government Sponsored Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique experience • Broad scope of practice • Security or administrative rules may infringe on autonomy • Requirements to adhere to government policies and regulations
<p>Group Practice Small Group/Multi-Specialty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established patient base • Schedule/coverage flexibility • Partnership with other physicians • Potential income division conflicts • Assistance from other physicians in the office • Possible ownership opportunity 	<p>HMO/Permanente Medical Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established patient case • In network/internal physician referrals • No overhead costs
<p>Community Clinic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with underserved population • Ability to partner with other clinics/hospitals • Opportunity to give back to the community • May depend on federal and/or public funding 	<p>Academia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to teach and/or mentor • Limited clinical responsibilities • Opportunity to mold new generation of family physicians • Flexibility with involvement in various projects
<p>International Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to travel • Insight into other medical communities • Unique experience • Contract-based and full-time positions 	<p>Another Option: Locum Tenens Fill a temporary opening in a hospital or practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsure about your practice setting, gives you options to explore • Job assignments can range from a few days to several months • Benefit of checking out working arrangements beforehand <p>More information: AAFP's list of Locum Tenens agencies or call (800) 274-2237, Ext. 4162</p>

TIP: Curriculum Vitae (CV)

It is very important to have an effective curriculum vitae (CV) when applying for your ideal job. The AAFP has put together [How to Prepare your Curriculum Vitae](#). This resource will give you information on how to write a personal statement, suggestions for reference materials on CV preparation, and tips for requesting letters of reference.

Interview Process

Interviewing for a professional opportunity is an important process. You should first assess a practice's general characteristics. Once you have decided these characteristics suit you, then work out the details. Use these areas of questioning to help decide if this practice is right for you, and if you are right for this practice.

Questions You Should Ask Yourself:

- Location— *Does the location meet your family's needs/desires?*
- Practice Characteristics— *What is the working relationship like between doctors and staff?*
- Quality of Care— *How does the practice improve patient outcomes?*
- Office Management—*How frequently does the office measure patient cycle time and flow?*
- Practice Stability— *What kind of reserves or financial backing does the practice have?*
- Work Expectations— *How many Patients will you see each day?*

About interviewing

The interview should be about you and the practice deciding if you would be a good fit. The potential employer/partner will be assessing your personality type and clinical skill levels to see if you are an ideal candidate. You should also make observations during the interview of things you like and dislike about the potential partnership.

Before the first interview

Decide where you want to practice, the type of practice you are looking for, and so on—identify the ideal practice characteristics before you send out your résumé.

Your cover letter should be concise, engaging, and persuasive. Communicate why your background and interests have led you to apply for the position and why you would be a good fit.

Limit the cover letter to one page and have a friend or colleague proofread it for spelling and grammatical errors.

Your résumé or CV should highlight your accomplishments and skills. For examples of résumés and CVs, consult online sources, such as the [National Institutes of Health](#).

At the interview

Always be well rested, prompt and well dressed for an interview. Try to relax and be yourself. Be professional and try to establish a rapport with your interviewers. Show that you possess good people skills, make eye contact and smile.

Listen carefully to the questions and be as responsive as possible in your answers. Give concise examples from your work or life to back up what you say.

Questions you might be asked:

- Why do you think you are a good fit for this practice?
- What are your strengths/weaknesses?
- Describe a few difficult patient interactions and how you dealt with those situations.
- Describe how you respond to work pressures.
- Where do you see yourself in five years? In 10 years? How does working in our practice fit with your professional goals?
- What do you like most about your specialty?
- What are your interests outside of practicing medicine?
- Tell me something about yourself that is not on your résumé/CV.



Prospective Practice or Partnership

It is important to consider other factors before joining a practice or forming a partnership with other physicians. The new prospective practice/partner and yourself should have similar ideas, goals, and understanding of how this practice will run. These are a few topics/questions to ask your potential employer, business partner, and yourself.

<p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Location meet your family's needs/desires◦ Community's demographics-growing/underserved◦ Cost of living <p>Practice characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Working relationship between physicians◦ Option to work with hospitalized patients◦ Privileging at the local hospital◦ Working conditions with specializing physicians in the area <p>Quality of care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Quality measurement understanding◦ Consultations and Referrals, Any restrictions?◦ Medical Records system, Are they available to review?◦ Evidence-based, peer reviewed guidelines◦ Clinical policy decision making◦ Current and future goals for future technology tools <p>Office management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Patient scheduling◦ Patient waiting room average time◦ Office measure patient cycle time and flow◦ Patient satisfaction/experience measurement◦ Provider satisfaction measured◦ Billing/Collection ratio◦ Staff turnover rate/Staff satisfaction◦ Adequate equipment for your scope of medicine, will they buy/lease equipment if not?◦ Is the facility comfortable? Could you work there efficiently?◦ Type of information and technology systems in place◦ Your input in office policies	<p>Work expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Patients expected in a day◦ Patient panel◦ Work-ins/emergency patients◦ Seniority◦ Patient population language◦ Amount of days in your work week◦ Vacation options <p>Practice economics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Finance management/monitoring◦ HMO contracts◦ Health plans/IPAs/medical groups in the area◦ Type of billing system◦ Pay for Performance (P4P), If so, how many different programs? <p>Practice stability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Strategic planning last conducted and what type◦ Reserves and Financial backing◦ Ownership agreement◦ Physician turnover rate, Can you contact them?◦ "Buy in" opportunities <p>Practice costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Total overhead, division among physicians◦ Capital expenditures◦ Ratio of full/part-time staff <p>Access to risk pools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Are you at risk for utilization of outpatient services?◦ Is efficient management of care rewarded? If so, how?◦ Does the medical group accept pharmacy risk? <p>Compensation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Salary guarantee? For how long?◦ Anticipated earnings in future years◦ Bonuses◦ Retirement plan◦ Benefits
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Legal matters- A written employment agreement should cover:

- The work expected of you
- Exclusivity requirements (i.e., can you moonlight?)
- Compensation (i.e., amount and when paid)
- Malpractice insurance including tail coverage (i.e., coverage required if/when you leave a professional liability company or leave practice)
- Employment termination clause (i.e., does the clause have "for cause" and "without cause" termination policies?)
- Non-competition clause—how restrictive is it?

TIP: Have your lawyer and accountant review any and all contracts before your sign

Managing Your Practice

The LAFP along with the AAFP have put together a helpful overview of topics you should consider when choosing and managing your practice situation.

Starting your own practice

If you are thinking of starting your own practice in Louisiana, it is important that you begin your planning early. There are many aspects you need to consider to establish a successful practice. The process should begin with careful evaluation of potential locations and managed care or other health insurance income streams. Credentialing will take several months, so allow yourself an ample amount of time to become credentialed with Medicare, Medicaid, and commercial health plans. Check out the AAFP's publication [On Your Own: Starting a Medical Practice from the Ground Up](#). This step-by-step guide will help point you in the right direction. You may purchase the guide by clicking the link above or by contacting the AAFP's Orders Department at (800)944-0000.

Building a healthy business will give you and your staff more time to spend with your patients by minimizing the time needed to run your business. Here are a few tips to help you get started.

Marketing your practice

Marketing your practice is a key business tool to help establish a flourishing patient base. When starting your own practice, you need to consider which type of marketing plan will work best for you. Consider the practice's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to its success.

The AAFP has established some marketing tips for your practice:

- Identify your competitors and compare your practice to theirs. What can you do to make your practice stand out?
- Build a referral base. Introduce yourself to local pharmacists, medical societies, referral services, staff at hospitals and emergency departments, and other colleagues.
- Become a friendly voice of authority. Speak to schools, at community and hospital organizations, and submit columns on health care issues to your local newspaper.
- Publish articles in the LAFP weekly e-newsletter and submit CME articles for accreditation in the quarterly journal— Louisiana Family Doctor. This is a great, FREE way to get your name out there!
- The AAFP offers kits with outlines and speaking points on topics such as weight control, nutrition, smoking cessation, TAR WARS, women's health, STDs, and alcohol. To order any of these tools, call (800) 274-2237.
- Create and maintain a website for your practice to enhance communication with your patients.
- For more marketing tips read the [AAFP's Family Practice Management](#).

Preparing for the unexpected

Preparing for unexpected events and disasters is a type of planning that you and the practice need to become familiar with to help prevent major downfall. This type of preparation entails a great deal of research. You need to establish a plan with which you feel comfortable. The AAFP has developed two manuals designed to help members prepare for the unexpected: [AAFP Preparedness Manual for Disasters and Public Health Emergencies](#) and [Preparing Your Practice for a Medical Emergency](#). You must be a member to access these files.

If you are not currently a member, sign up today to access these benefits and more.

Louisiana State Medical Society— Disaster Planning Report

This report documents the major breakdowns and failures of emergency preparedness plans and responses related to health care in an effort to educate physicians and the health care community on the need to reassess their emergency preparedness plans in light of the lessons Louisiana learned.



Managing Your Practice

Health Information Technology

Health Information Technology (HIT) is taking over the practice of medicine. Electronic Health Records (EHR) is designed to be a systemic collections of patient and population records.

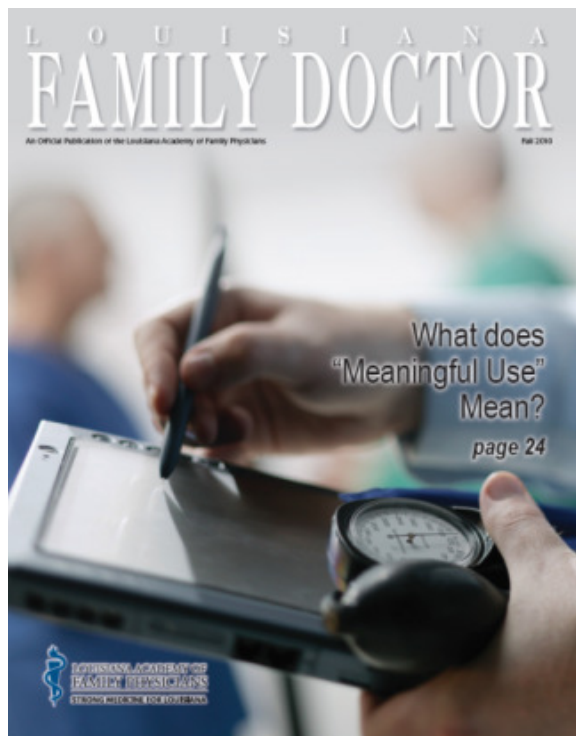
This system is one of the most efficient ways for family physicians to exchange data and communicate with other physicians, hospitals and laboratories. Adopting the EHR process is often complicated, but well worth the time and effort.

The [American Recovery and Reinvestment Act](#) (ARRA) was signed into law in February 2009. ARRA, also known as the stimulus bill made significant investments in health information technology.

Beginning in 2011, all community-based physicians will be eligible to receive incentives to help pay for electronic medical record (EHR) implementation. Incentives ranging from \$40,000 to \$65,000 will be in the form of increased payment through either Medicare or Medicaid. In order to receive incentives, physicians will have to meet “[meaningful use](#)” standards. In order to assist practices in this process, the federal government has funded a Louisiana Regional Extension Center (RECs). The Academy has been very active in the development of the RECs in Louisiana. The State has consolidated information about HIT activities, including those related to health information exchange, patient engagement, and others.

LAFP is a member of the Louisiana Health Care Quality Forum Health Information Exchange Committee, Health Information Technology Committee and the REC Workgroup. Its goal is to develop a prototype community infrastructure and tools that support the adoption, integration, and meaningful use of EHRs for small practices.

The LHIT Resource Center serves as a neutral, credible source for information on health IT and EHRs as well as provides continued support to your practice beyond EHR installation and meaningful use achievement.



For more information about the Louisiana adoption of HIT go to the [LAFP Health Information Technology](#) web-page. The AAFP's [Center for Health Information Technology](#) provides you with information to help you choose the system that best fits your needs.

LAFP Communications and HIT

The LAFP features many HIT related articles in its communications including the Weekly Family Medicine Update, the LAFP Website and the *Louisiana Family Doctor* magazine.

Archived weekly e-newsletters and previous issues of the quarterly magazine can be found at www.lafp.org under the publications tab.

Picture left is the Fall 2010 issue of the LAFP quarterly magazine, *Louisiana Family Doctor* where we defined what Meaningful Use means.... This and other resources are continually developed and published for our members benefit!

Managing Your Practice

Coding

When it comes to coding, it is important to realize that you must stay on top of changes that can impact your payment. This can prove to be challenging, but it can make or break your payment system. Start working on coding and documenting for billing purposes.

There are also modifiers that can get you the compensation you deserve. The LAFP continues to announce any updates on coding on the www.lafp.org as well as the Weekly Family Medicine Update. Be sure you are signed up to receive your today! Pictured right is the Weekly Family Medicine Update.



The AAFP has provided a great deal of [coding](#) resources on their website that will help you along the way. Resources may be found at www.aafp.org and then following: [Home Page](#) > [Running a Practice](#) > [Coding Resources & Assistance](#)

Remember to stay on top of any changes that may occur, this is your money!

TransformMED

TransformMED is at the vanguard of the new Patient-Centered Medical Home movement to effectively and significantly improve health care for Americans while increasing satisfaction for family physicians and their practice team. TransformMED acts as a leader and catalyst to generate positive transformations in family medicine and primary care, by using and refining a core group of best practices—[TransformMED's Patient-Centered Model-of-Care](#).



TransformMED also fosters ongoing collaborative relationships among all stakeholders, especially key players in family medicine and primary care, by providing collaborative online tools and resources that promote peer-to-peer relationships and [learning community](#).

TransformMED engages with top experts from within the specialty, industry and policy arenas along with forging partnerships with vendors, developing customized and integrated product, and refining existing products to meet the needs of primary care practices seeking to become Patient-Centered Medical Homes.

Learn more about TransformMED at www.transformed.com or call (866) 826-8700.

TransformMED Delta Exchange

TransformMED's Delta-Exchange (DX) brings together a community of health care professionals and provides tools and resources designed to help primary care practices transform to PCMH.

An easy-to-use, private, collaborative Web site, DX provides a place for practices to collaborate on projects, ask questions of the group or TransformMED facilitator, and to share practical knowledge and experiences.

LAFP members received discounted one year membership!



Managing Your Practice

Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH)

A Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) is simply a better way – a more effective and efficient model of health care delivery.

This new model produces better care and lower costs.

In a Patient Centered Medical Home:

- Patients have a **relationship** with a personal primary care physician.
- A practice-based care team takes collective responsibility for the patient's **ongoing care**.
- The **care team** is responsible for providing or arranging **all** the patient's health care needs.
- Patients can expect care that is **coordinated** across care settings and disciplines.
- **Quality** is measured and improved as part of daily work flow.
- Patients experience **enhanced access** and communication.
- The practice uses **electronic health records**, registries, and other **clinical support systems**.

The patient-centered medical home is a health care delivery model based on the relationship between a patient and their personal primary care physician. With its growing popularity in the health care reform discussion, LAFP provides you with tools to educate yourself, your colleagues and your patients on the medical home.

You can easily find out where you stand by taking the Medical Home IQ and measuring your practice against the TransformMED MHIQ Assessment's eight core sets of competencies or modules. Benchmark your practice's current performance with this [online tool](#). Answer questions and get your current score in each of the eight areas, along with recommendations for improvements.

LAFP and the PCMH

The LAFP is constantly promoting the Patient-Centered Medical Home in and around the state of Louisiana. Picture to the right is the Winter 2010 issue of the Louisiana Family Doctor magazine featuring the PCMH building blocks on the cover. Inside, the beginning of the PCMH "repeatable steps". You may access this magazine and other archived issues at www.lafp.org.

The LAFP also holds many events through out the year in regards to PCMH for all levels of membership. In February 2011, LAFP/AAFP Past President Michael Fleming, MD, FAAFP, addressed the student, resident and active members with a breakdown of the PCMH concept. In May of 2011, the LAFP is teaming up with the Louisiana Chapter of Pediatricians and the Louisiana Health Care Quality Forum to bring a one day, PCMH in Louisiana conference. Mark your calendars to attend.

Patient-Centered Medical Home

One step at a time.
Get started.



Managing Your Practice

Documentation

Documenting is essential to making sure you provide good patient care and are in turn compensated for your efforts. You have learned about documenting and its importance in residency, but it is very important to stay up to date on all documentations. Check out the AAFP's [Family Practice Toolbox \(FPM Toolbox\)](#) for time-saving flow sheets, standardized forms, exam templates, efficient charting formats, and more resources to help you improve your efficiency and effective record keeping.

Family Practice Management

If you accept a position within a practice or with an employer who has adopted electronic health records (EHRs), you will quickly gain an appreciation for how quickly you can retrieve and use clinical data from a well-organized, documented electronic patient chart. EHRs can also help collect, report, and analyze clinical performance data for in-office quality improvement and some of the enhanced payment incentives from health plans. For more ideas on implementation or use of EHRs, visit the [Center for Health IT](#).

Balance between your Practice and your Life

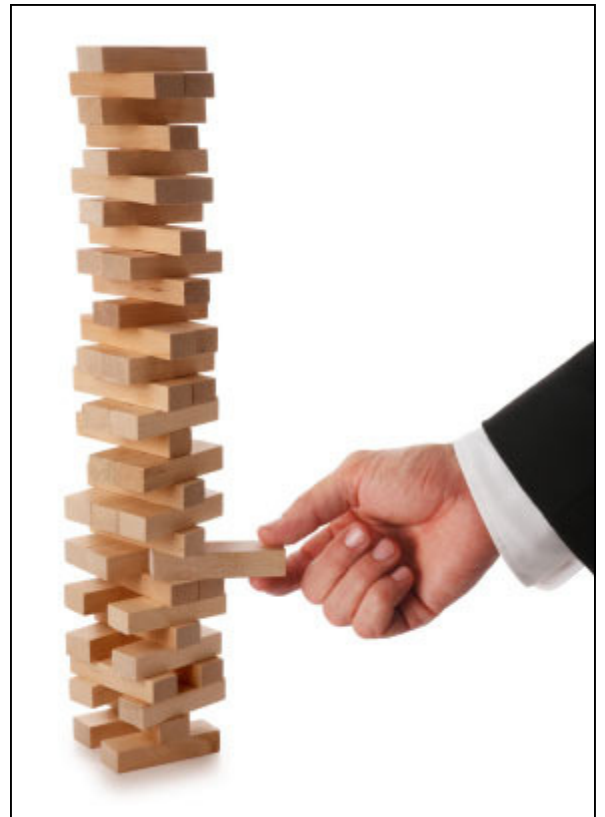
Managing a successful career or starting your own practice is based on the achievement of a balanced life. If you put your personal life on hold during training and school, now is the time to become refocused on getting it back. Not only should you set a professional three, five and ten year plan, but you should as well set one for your personal life. Then when offers come your way for different Family Medicine positions, you can revisit your personal plan to see how it will benefit or hinder that as well.

It is important to remember to take time for yourself. If you establish a balance between your work life and your life outside of work, this transition will be much easier.

This process can consume your time, so you must take time out for yourself and your loved ones. If you make sure to have some "YOU" time, your patients and your personal life will benefit.

Now is the time to establish the list of your personal and professional goals. Write down things that are important to you and configure a plan of how to achieve these goals. It is important to have hobbies and interests that are your own. When considering your practice options, make sure your lifestyle fits in with the potential practice settings. It is true that the practice decision you make today most likely will not be your last.

The AAFP has many resources to help you find a good [Physician Life Balance](#). These different resources contain tips and strategies to help you establish your balance.



New Physician Checklist

This checklist was created to help give you an idea of issues to consider as you enter into your new practice. This checklist will help point you in the right direction.

Residency Completion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fellowship Completion (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice Preferences	<input type="checkbox"/>
CV Prepared/Completed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prospective Employer/Location Research	<input type="checkbox"/>
CME Report Updated	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procedures Tracking Sheet Created	<input type="checkbox"/>
Application Log	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contract	<input type="checkbox"/>
Licensures/Permits	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical (state #1)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical (state #2)	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEA/CDS number	<input type="checkbox"/>
Insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>
State Department of Insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Licensure Update	<input type="checkbox"/>
Credentialing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hospital Privileging	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contact LAFP	<input type="checkbox"/>



Loan Repayment Options



The Family Medicine specialty is in high demand throughout the country. Communities, hospitals, managed care organizations and physician groups are all actively recruiting graduates of Family Medicine residency programs.

Recognizing the demand for primary care physicians, there are several loan repayment programs that offer incentives for physicians who choose to practice in underserved areas.

Programs are in place to help you pay back your medical school loans. In exchange for significant repayment help most of the programs require the recipient to agree to a two year minimum of providing primary care services in federally designated Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA).

There are options at the National and State level, these are a few:

Louisiana State Loan Repayment Program (SLRP)

The purpose of this program is to encourage primary care practitioners to serve in HPSA. The compensation options help to enhance the provision of the health care services, and in return the program will repay governmental or commercial educational loans obtained by the physician. Visit the [LAFP website](#) for more information about this option.

National Health Service Corps Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program

The National Health Service Corps (NHSC) is a federal program housed in the Bureau of Health Professions in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. NHSC has both a scholarship and loan repayment program for eligible health professionals in exchange for healthcare in designated underserved areas. Family physicians have participated in the loan repayment program. Participants of both the scholarship and loan repayment programs are placed into HPSA's designated by the U.S. Office of Shortage Designation. More information can be found on the [NHSC Web site](#) or by calling NHSC's toll-free number 800.221.9393, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. EST.

MedJob Louisiana

Med Job Louisiana will offer statewide recruitment services to all HPSA's in the state through a partnership between the Department of Health and Hospitals, the Louisiana Area Health Education Centers and the Louisiana Rural Health Access Program. The Med Job Louisiana website is www.medjoblouisiana.com.

Faculty Loan Repayment Program (FLRP)

This program provides a financial incentive for degree-trained health professionals from disadvantaged background to pursue academic careers. The Federal government agrees to pay, for each year of faculty service, up to \$20,000 of the outstanding principal and interest on the participant's educational loans. For more information, visit the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration's website at <http://www.hrsa.gov/index.html>

When considering student loan consolidation, explore the many different options and financial arrangements. Many people make the mistake of jumping on the first loan consolidation program they see.

Important: By law, you may only consolidate your loans *ONCE*. It is crucial for you to investigate the different options available to you. The more investigative work you do, the better your financial decision will be in the end. More information on loan repayment is available in the AAFP's [Debt Management Guide](#).

Make the Most of Your Membership

Value of Membership

Being a member of the Louisiana Academy of Family Physicians (LAFP) signifies your decision to identify and associate with the most knowledgeable family physicians and become a part of America's largest specialty society. As the only association that speaks solely for Family Medicine, your decision to join the LAFP/AAFP helps allow the voice of Family Medicine to be heard.

The LAFP strives to improve member benefits as well as increase them every year. We are constantly finding new partnerships to benefit you and your practice as well as increasing avenues of communication with the community.

Member Benefits:

- **CME Resources** To provide high-quality, affordable care for all people, you must maintain and continuously improve your competency in family medicine. The LAFP and AAFP offers several state of the art continuing medical education programs each year. Visit www.aafp.org/cme/reporting to access and print your CME transcript, forward your CME transcript to a third party or report your CME activities (member ID required).
- **Legislative Advocacy** Representing more than 94,000 members, the LAFP/AAFP ensures the voice of family medicine is clearly heard. LAFP tracks and lobbies for legislation impacting family physicians and their patients.
- **Practice Management Assistance** A healthy practice gives you more undivided, one on one time with your patients. The AAFP has developed programs and materials to help you streamline the management of your practice.
- **Patient Education** As a family physician, your role in treating the whole patient includes encouraging healthy lifestyles. The AAFP offers a variety of programs and materials to help you help your patients make positive changes.
- **Communications** LAFP communicates to its members through its up-to-date Web site that contains information about CME activities, legislative issues, current medical news and other helpful resources. The Academy publishes a quarterly magazine, *Louisiana Family Doctor*, and several other smaller publications throughout the year. Members also receive [Weekly Family Medicine Update](#), an electronic newsletter.
- **Discounts** The AAFP and LAFP are constantly seeking partnerships in an effort to bring members discounts are various services.

“More than any other organization, LAFP directly advocates on my behalf. LAFP provides a way for us, the family doctors, to address the issues that occur outside our exam room.”

-James Taylor, Jr., MD
Member since 2004

Make the Most of Your Membership

LAFP-WORKING FOR YOU

Lean on the LAFP/AAFP to make your transaction from residency run smoothly. The LAFP's sole focus on every initiative is the family physician. That is why member physicians trust the LAFP to support them throughout their future, no matter what career path they choose.

LAFP Membership

During transition from residency to practice, your membership will ensure you the support you need, be rest assured that it will not end when your residency does.

What we need from you now is:

- Updated Contact Information
- Licensure Information to the AAFP

Once you provide this information, your membership will be updated and you will be an Active Member!

Continuing Medical Education (CME)

Family physicians rely on CME programs and products for high quality, relevant learning experiences. LAFP CME activities address physicians' learning needs and practice gaps as are recognized on a state level.

You may receive CME by reading the *Louisiana Family Doctor*, or by checking online under the CME section of the LAFP website. We constantly update these webpage's as CME is one of the core priorities of the LAFP.

LAFP Scientific Assembly

Join us for over 20 hours of CME at this year's LAFP 64th Annual Assembly and Exhibition in New Orleans, LA, August 4-7, 2011. This is the LAFP's premiere CME event and by far the largest. Join your fellow Louisiana members of all ages and practices in one location!

Meet residents and family physicians with common interests including humanitarian effort, federal and state advocacy, research, fitness and of course, fun with friends and family!

Advocacy

Today's health environment is changing rapidly and fundamentally. The LAFP legislative efforts indicate the LAFP is working to change the practice environment and reach its goal of universal access to health care and better payment modes that support Family Medicine.

Louisiana Family Medicine Political Action Committee (LaFamPac)

LaFamPac is the Louisiana Academy of Family Physicians' state political action committee (PAC). Its purpose is to help elect candidates to the LA Legislature who support LAFP's legislative goals and objectives with the intention to strengthen the voice of the LAFP and Family Medicine in Louisiana.

We support candidates who are sympathetic to the cause of promoting quality health care and the medical profession and provide education to candidates and potential candidates who seek public office. This voluntary family medicine PAC provides Louisiana family physicians a strong voice in the LA state legislature and helps the Academy in its efforts to impact both health policy and the overall practice

Leadership

Leadership is a learned skill, and the opportunities for leadership are multiplying.

National Conference of Special Constituencies (NCSC)

If you want to get more involved in your state and national academies, being a delegate to the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) annual [National Conference of Special Constituencies](#) (NCSC) is the perfect opportunity.

LAFP Committees and Board of Directors

LAFP offers leadership training through opportunities on committees as well as our Board of Directors. By being an Academy leader, you will have a voice and vote on key issues affecting the Family Medicine specialty.

LAFP provides opportunities for both **Resident and New Physician** members to coordinate statewide activities for the fellow family medicine colleagues. Whether it is education, legislation or membership that interest you, we have a place for your voice to be heard and to speak for the betterment of your profession. Please visit the LAFP Website Board of Directors page for more details.

LAFP Partnerships

Being a member of the Louisiana Academy of Family Physicians (LAFP) signifies your decision to identify and associate with the most knowledgeable family physicians and become a part of America's largest specialty society. As the only association that speaks solely for the family physician, your decision to join the LAFP/AAFP helps make the voice of family medicine heard. The LAFP Strives to improve member benefits as well as increase them every year. We are constantly finding new partnerships to benefit you and your practice as well as increasing avenues of communication with the community. Access all benefits at www.lafp.org.

LAFP has formed a partnership with vaccine purchasing program **Atlantic Health Partners** to save family physicians money when purchasing vaccines and advocate on behalf of family medicine practices among manufacturers and payers. There is no cost for LAFP members to enroll in the program and enrollment is voluntary.



The **Core Content Review of Family Medicine** is a unique educational resource for family physicians and other primary care professionals who desire a comprehensive, practical and affordable home-study program for earning continuing medical education (CME) credit or preparing for Board examination.

**The Core Content Review
of Family Medicine**

Educating Family Physicians Since 1968



Enterprise Rent-A-Car is pleased to announce that a preferred partnership has just been established with LA Academy of Family Physicians, the following includes information on the Business Rental Program.



Our chapter is proud to partner with **National Procedures Institute (NPI)** to provide you an exciting opportunity to bring new procedures to your practice and to generate revenue for your state Academy at the same time. When you attend an NPI course, NPI will send \$50 to the Louisiana Academy of Family Physicians. All you have to do is enter "Louisiana" in the Referral Code field when you register online at the NPI Web site so that our chapter receives credit for your attendance.



Prescriber's Letter is not connected with any drug company and does not accept advertising or support, and subscriber information is kept strictly confidential. As a LAFP member, you will pay a reduced subscription price, and the LAFP will receive 20 percent of all incoming new subscription revenue that results from this promotional mailing. This non-dues revenue will be used to fund LAFP's annual meeting and other educational activities.



TransformMED is at the vanguard of the new Patient-Centered Medical Home movement to effectively and significantly improve health care for Americans while increasing satisfaction for family physicians and their practice team.



LAFP is a member of the **Louisiana Health Care Quality Forum** Health Information Exchange Committee, Health Information Technology Committee and the REC Workgroup. Its goal is to develop a prototype community infrastructure and tools that support the adoption, integration, and meaningful use of EHRs for small practices. LAFP members will receive a \$200 discount when you sign up for the REC Services!



Online Resources

Staying Current with Medicine:

American Family Physician
www.aafp.org/afp

Journal of Family Practice
www.jfponline.com

ACP Journal Club
www.acpj.org/?hp

Up-to-Date
www.uptodate.com

Essential Evidence PLUS
www.essentialevidenceplus.com/

Practice Management and Managed Care:

Louisiana Academy of Family Physicians
www.lafp.org

Family Practice Management
www.aafp.org/fpm

National Guideline Clearinghouse
www.guideline.gov

Physicians Practice
www.physicianspractice.com

Medical Professional Management and Marketing
www.practicemgmt.com

Medico-Legal Resources:

AMA's Legal Issues for Physicians
www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/4541.html

Cooperative of American Physicians
www.capmpt.com/risk_management/risk_management_library/articles_and_forms

Harvard University Risk Management Foundation
www.rmhf.harvard.edu

Payment and Compensation Information:

Medical Group Management Association
www.mgma.com

Family Practice Management
www.aafp.org/fpm

Technology Resources:

AAFP's Center for Health Information Technology
www.centerforhit.org

AAFP Partners for Patients EHR Program
www.centerforhit.org/x25.xml

Family Practice Management
www.aafp.org/fpm

Employment Opportunities & Career Planning:

FP Jobs Online
www.fpjobsonline.org

AAFP Physician Placement Services & Career Opportunities Online
www.aafp.org/careers

American College of Physicians Career Opportunities
www.acponline.org/jobs

Med Job Louisiana
www.medjoblouisiana.com

Family Medicine Specialty Resources:

Louisiana Academy of Family Physicians
www.lafp.org

American Academy of Family Physicians
www.aafp.org

American Board of Family Medicine
www.theabfm.org

AAFP CME Courses
www.aafp.org/cme

AAFP Discounts for New FPs
www.aafp.org/experience.xml

Loan Repayment:

Healthcare Workforce Development
Division National Health Service Corps
(NHSC)/State Loan Repayment Program
www.oshpd.ca.gov/HWDD/SLRP.html

AAFP Funding Resources for Practicing
in Underserved Areas
www.aafp.org/online/en/home/clinical/publichealth/culturalprof/underserved.html