



**Academy introduces the Indiana Physician Coalition to stop ‘scope creep’**  
*New collaboration of medical associations and societies launched today*

Across the U.S., nonphysician health professionals are continuing attempts to expand their scope of practice. Now, the Indiana Academy of Family Physicians has joined a new alliance of medical associations and specialty societies. Known as the Indiana Physician Coalition, its mission is to ensure health care in Indiana continues to be led by physicians and is delivered with a team-based approach.

In all, the coalition is more than 10,000 physicians strong, including and medical students who are members of IAFP, Indiana State Medical Association, Indiana Osteopathic Association and other specialty societies in anesthesiology, dermatology, emergency medicine, ophthalmology, orthopaedics, psychiatry, radiology and surgery.

“We are proud to stand with our fellow physicians to oppose ‘scope creep’ in Indiana,” said Richard Feldman, MD, IAFP’s Commission on Legislation chairman and coalition representative. “By coming together, we can more effectively advocate to prevent inappropriate scope of practice expansion and support other legislation that will protect patients from harm, increase access to quality care and help control health care spending.”

To get updates on the coalition, members can sign up at [INphysicians.org](http://INphysicians.org), or follow the coalition on Twitter (@IN\_Physicians) and Facebook (@IndianaPhysicians).

**Health care teams need leaders**

Health care is often delivered with a team-based approach, which includes physicians and other health professionals working together, sharing decisions and information for the benefit of the patient. The coalition is advocating to ensure that physicians, the most highly trained medical providers, will continue to lead this team-based approach in Indiana.

New physicians accumulate up to 16,000 clinical hours by the time they complete their training. It takes seven to 12 years of preparation for practice, including four years of medical school and three to eight years of residency training and fellowship in a medical or surgical specialty.

And yet, many patients are unaware of who may be providing their medical treatment.

In an independent survey of Indiana citizens regarding the management of a patient’s care, the coalition found that 1 out of every 4 Hoosiers were not confident that the provider who had seen them over the past few years was a physician, rather than an advanced practitioner. Examples of advanced practitioners include a nurse practitioner (APRN), nurse anesthetist (CRNA), nurse midwife (APRN), optometrist, pharmacist, physician assistant, podiatrist, psychologist or other clinician.

“There is no doubt that all of our colleagues play a vital role in the health care workforce, each according to their training,” said Dr. Lauren Stanley, MD, president of the American College of Emergency Physicians (Indiana Chapter) and fellow coalition representative. “I work closely with APRNs and rely on them to help care for my patients. However, a physician-led care team model is still vital for high-quality patient care, given the skills and experience of a physician.”

### **Hoosiers trust Indiana physicians**

In its statewide survey, the coalition also found that patients prefer their health care to be led by a physician. More than 3 out of 4 Hoosiers over the age of 40 believe that physicians should have primary responsibility for leading and coordinating their health care.

Other findings include:

- **83%** of Hoosiers believe that physicians and nurse practitioners need to work in a coordinated manner to ensure that patients get the care they need.
- **76%** of Hoosiers believe that, in the event of a medical complication or emergency, a physician's education and training are necessary to ensure patient safety.
- **73%** of Hoosiers believe that nurse practitioners treating patients with one or more chronic diseases should be overseen by physicians.

“At the end of the day, the quality of your health care really depends on the qualifications of the professional leading your medical team,” added Dr. Stanley. “That’s why Hoosiers want to know that the person responsible for their health care has the necessary education and training to help them make the best decisions.”

Stay tuned for further updates as the Indiana Physician Coalition begins to make its case on why Hoosiers trust Indiana physicians for their health care.