



American College of Preventive Medicine

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ACPM Hosts Briefing on Lifestyle Medicine: “Transforming Medical Education to Prevent Chronic Disease”

Yesterday the American College of Preventive Medicine (ACPM), in conjunction with the Lifestyle Medicine Education Collaborative (LMEd), held a congressional briefing entitled, “Transforming Medical Education to Prevent Chronic Disease.” The briefing focused on the need to include training on nutrition, physical activity, and other lifestyle elements in medical school curricula and continuing medical education (CME). The briefing highlighted two bills currently in the House of Representatives: The [ENRICH Act](#), sponsored by Congressman Tim Ryan (D-OH-13) and Congressman Patrick Tiberi (R-OH-12), which would establish grants to medical schools to develop or expand integrated nutrition and physical education curricula; and the [EAT for Health Act](#), sponsored by Congressman Raul Grijalva (D-AZ-3), which would ensure that federally employed primary health care professionals have continuing education related to nutrition.

Briefing panelist Michael Barry, CAE, Executive Director of ACPM, noted the important work that preventive medicine physicians do to advance population health, including the implementation of lifestyle medicine throughout communities. He stated, “conversations are shifting away from how to treat symptoms to quickly identifying the root cause of a problem, which is often lifestyle related.”

Panelist Dr. Jennifer Trilk, Co-Founder of LMEd, highlighted the lack of lifestyle medicine training in medical school and how it contributes to only 14% of medical residents feeling that upon graduation they possessed the ability to provide counseling on lifestyle-related issues such as nutrition and fitness. Because of this, institutions like the University of South Carolina School of Medicine have started to implement a focus on the evidence-based discipline of lifestyle medicine to train physicians to prevent chronic diseases before they start.

Panelist Dr. Douglas Kamerow, former Assistant Surgeon General, spoke about how the federal government needs to be the leader in prevention and health promotion. After tobacco use, diet and the lack of physical activity are leading causes of death in the United States and many developed nations. Population-level care should be a priority for the federal government, as preventing diseases before they start will save lives.

Finally, panelist Dr. Dexter Shurney, Chief Medical Director and Executive Director of Global Health & Wellness at [Cummins, Inc.](#), described Cummins’ innovative wellness program for its employees, the [LiveWell Center](#). When the company found it difficult to find physicians trained in addressing lifestyle issues, Cummins worked with ACPM and the American College of Lifestyle Medicine (ACLM) to develop a CME curriculum, the [Lifestyle Medicine Core Competencies Program, that comprehensively addresses physicians’ lack of knowledge and skills around lifestyle behaviors](#). The 55,000 employee Fortune 500 company has had so much success with its program that it is on track to reverse Type 2 diabetes in 10%



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of identified employee patients this year. Dr. Shurney noted that there is not only a sound business case in focusing on lifestyle medicine, but it is also “the right thing to do.”

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About ACPM

[The American College of Preventive Medicine](#) is a professional society providing leadership in research, professional education, development of public policy, and enhancement of standards of preventive medicine for and on behalf of its physician members. Uniquely trained in both clinical medicine and public health, preventive medicine specialists are equipped to understand and reduce the risks of disease, disability, and death in individuals and population groups.

About LMEd

The [Lifestyle Medicine Education Collaborative](#) offers leadership, guidance and resources to advance the adoption and implementation of lifestyle medicine curricula throughout medical education.