

Reference Committee on Health of the Public and Science

2015 Congress of Delegates of the American Academy of Family Physicians, Denver, CO

Delegate and Chair, Louis A. Kazal, Jr. M.D., FAAFP

Brief Commentary: Testimony on the resolutions assigned to the Reference Committee on the Health of the Public and Science was dominated by delegates addressing those resolutions related in some manner to social determinants of health, some of it emotional and compelling.

Resolution No. 401 “Quantitating Increased Risk”

This resolution asked the AAFP to provide quantitative risk information in its publications and guidelines. There was supportive testimony for use of NNT and NNH in publications and guidelines. Due to editorial independence, the AAFP is not able to dictate how journals present information. The reference committee, however, agreed with the spirit of the resolution and recommended a substitute resolution.

Outcome: ADOPTED Substitute Resolution:

- That the AAFP support the inclusion of quantitative risk information [such as absolute risk, incidence of adverse events, specific population information, number needed to treat (NNT) and number needed to harm (NNH)] be published in medical literature along with evidence-based recommendations, when appropriate.

Resolution No. 402 from the Washington Chapter entitled “Where Nutrition and Poverty Meet”

This resolution called upon the AAFP to do two things: include reduction of income, education, and nutrition inequality in its strategic objectives and create formalized and sustainable partnerships with public health agencies with the goal of reducing income, education, and nutrition inequality as the essential components in combating obesity and poor health. The reference committee heard multiple statements in support of the spirit of the resolution. There also was concern that the language of the resolution was not actionable and several felt that current policy already addressed the intent.

Outcome: ADOPTED Substitute Resolution:

- That the AAFP include the reduction of the negative effects of income, education, and nutrition inequality in the AAFP’s goals.
- That the AAFP collaborate with public health agencies to reduce the negative effects of income, education and nutrition inequality in order to improve health outcomes, eg. obesity.

Resolution No. 403 from the Kansas Chapter entitled “Encourage Climbing Stairs at Meetings”

This resolution sought to have the AAFP encourage stair climbing at its meeting by various methods, including providing ribbons stating “I took the stairs today”, providing signage to direct attendees to the stairs, and restricting the use of elevators and escalators to all but the handicapped. There was mixed testimony, however, most were supportive of encouraging physical activity but not supportive of the resolution as written. There were concerns about labeling and shaming people, and the inability and inappropriateness of asking hotels to restrict access to elevators and escalators. Testimony included making attendees aware of the location of stairs and alternative options for encouraging physical activity.

Outcome: ADOPTED Substitute Resolution:

- That the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) encourage more physically active and less sedentary behavior while in attendance at AAFP meetings.

Resolution No. 404 “Immunizations”

This resolution sought to have the AAFP create “focus groups” to act as expert panels to review current literature on immunizations recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and to respond to member inquiries regarding immunization information. The reference committee appreciated the spirit of the resolution, however, noted that there are current mechanisms in place to ensure the development of evidence-based immunization policies. The AAFP has a liaison to the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices which reports to the Commission on Health of the Public and Science. The AAFP makes every effort to communicate with members and address questions as needed. The reference committee recommended that Resolution No. 404 not be adopted.

Outcome: EXTRACTED, NOT ADOPTED

Resolution No. 405 “Health Impact of Gentrification”

This resolution asked the AAFP to request that the Robert Graham Center for Policy Studies in Family Medicine and Primary Care investigate how gentrification impacts health outcomes and create policy recommendations that could impact the health of the most vulnerable. The testimony was in favor of the spirit of the resolution, however, there were concerns about the fiscal note required and the ability of the Graham Center to conduct the study. There are other organizations doing this work so it was suggested that the AAFP partner with these organizations to investigate the impact of gentrification. A substitute resolution was recommended.

Outcome: ADOPTED Substitute Resolution:

- That the AAFP partner with public health, policy centers, and/or research organizations to investigate how the process of gentrification impacts health outcomes and with this information create potential policy recommendations that could improve the health of the most vulnerable.

Resolution No. 406 “Discriminatory Policing is a Public Health Concern”

This resolution asked the AAFP to 1.) form a policy statement recognizing that “any use of force beyond that reasonably necessary to accomplish a lawful police purpose poses a serious ongoing public health issue that disproportionately affects minority communities”, 2.) advocate for the abolition of discriminatory law enforcement strategies, 3.) endorse community policing, and 4.) support communication, transparency, and accountability in interactions between police and the public. There was significant testimony in support of the resolution which focused on the effect of discriminatory policing and excessive force on minority populations. It was generally recognized that this is a social determinant of health and impacts the health of patients. Upon considerable discussion, the reference committee decided to recommend adoption of the first and fourth resolved clauses as they were more focused on national policy. The reference committee recommended that the second and third resolved clauses be referred to the Board for consideration to ensure they were evidenced-based and consistent with the President’s 21st Century Policing. The reference committee recommended that the first and fourth resolved clauses be adopted. And that the second and third resolved clauses 2 and 3 be referred to the B

Outcome: ADOPTED 1st and 4th Resolved Clauses. REFERRED TO BOARD 2nd and 3rd Resolved Clauses

Resolution No. 407 “Clogging the School-to-Prison 1 Pipeline”

This resolution called upon the AAFP to lobby for elimination of zero-tolerance policies in schools, for decreasing police presence in schools, and for implementation of evidence-based alternatives to discipline. It also asked the AAFP to endorse the American Academy of Pediatrics 2013 Policy Statement on Out-of-School Suspension and Expulsion. The testimony was in support of the spirit of the resolution regarding zero tolerance laws, as these laws disrupt education with potential long-term negative effects. The reference committee developed a substitute resolution as the resolution called for the AAFP to lobby against zero-tolerance laws which are determined on a local level instead of national level. In addition, the AAFP does not endorse policies from other organizations. A substitute resolution was recommended, extracted, amended and adopted.

Outcome: ADOPTED AMENDED Substitute Resolution:

- That the American Academy of Family Physicians develop a position paper on evidence-based and effective methods for discipline in schools and their effect on students, families, school districts and communities as a whole.

Resolution No. 408 “Driving Safety of Older Adults”

This resolution asked the AAFP to develop a policy regarding safety in the older adult driver. The testimony was supportive of the resolution and recognized this as a challenging issue dealt with by family physicians. It was clear that family physicians need more guidance and resources versus a policy. The reference committee recommended a substitute resolution.

Outcome: ADOPTED Substitute Resolution:

- That the AAFP explore ways to assist members in addressing driving safety in older adults, including tools and education.

Resolution No. 409 “Electronic Cigarettes”

This resolution asked the AAFP to communicate its concerns about the ill effects of tobacco products, e-cigarettes, their component products and accoutrements to retail sites that have health care services on site (such as stores with retail health clinics like Walgreens, Target, Walmart and Kroger), and urge them to cease the sale of tobacco products, e-cigarettes, their component products, and accoutrements. Testimony was supportive of the resolution stating the negative health effects of tobacco and nicotine products. The reference committee revised the wording of the retail clinics to clarify the target messaging.

Outcome: ADOPTED Substitute Resolution

- That the AAFP communicate its concerns about the ill effects of tobacco products, e cigarettes and their component products and accoutrements to companies with retail clinics and urge them to cease the sale of these products.

Resolution No. 410 “Oppose the Mandatory Drug Testing of Pregnant Women”

This resolution asked the AAFP to oppose the creation of legislation that requires physicians do mandatory drug testing on pregnant women and to oppose the practice of mandatory drug testing women during pregnancy. The testimony before the reference committee included issues of legislative impingement on medical practice and the possible negative consequences of mandatory reporting of drug abuse by pregnant women. Concerns included that mandatory reporting would keep pregnant women from seeking medical care and criminalize these women. The reference committee recommended a substitute resolution asking the AAFP to oppose the practice of mandatory reporting of the results of drug testing during pregnancy. The Congress disagreed. The resolution was extracted and the original resolution was referred to the Board for further study.

Outcome: REFERRED TO THE BOARD

Board of Directors Report H Policy Statement Review

In response to 2014 National Conference of Special Constituencies (NSCS) resolution No 3004, "Locally Grown Foods in Schools," which called for the AAFP School Nutrition policy statement to include advocacy for promotion of locally grown foods in schools, the Commission on Health of the Public and Science recommended and the Board of Directors approved to combine the policy statements titled, "School Nutrition" and "Healthy Eating in Schools" to create one cohesive policy, in addition to adding language encouraging use of locally grown foods in schools. The following language has been added to the new policy: "Schools should be encouraged to incorporate school gardens and locally grown foods." (April 2015 BOD)

Outcome: ADOPTED