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Contact: David Kinsman, (202) 261-4554

dkinsman@acponline.org

Jacquelyn Blaser, (202) 261-4572

jblaser@acponline.org

Lisa Lederer, (202) 371-1999

llederer@nationalpartnership.org

Consumers and Physicians Together Applaud Comprehensive Primary Care Initiative

(Washington) – The American College of Physicians (ACP) and the National Partnership for Women & Families joined today to commend the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services on the announcement of the new Comprehensive Primary Care Initiative.

“The American College of Physicians believes that the Comprehensive Primary Care Initiative offers enormous potential to promote the kind of personalized and coordinated care that patients seek and that physicians want to deliver,” said Steven Weinberger, MD, FACP, EVP and CEO of ACP.

“It will provide primary care physicians with the support needed to work hand-in-hand with patients toward a shared goal of ensuring high quality care while making the most efficient use of health care resources,” continued Dr. Weinberger. “We are particularly pleased that this initiative invites other payers to join with Medicare to support comprehensive, coordinated, and patient-centered primary care. Aligning support from multiple payers will provide a more realistic evaluation of these innovative payment and delivery reforms than earlier, more limited efforts.”

“Internal Medicine physicians know from their personal experiences that when care is coordinated and centered on patients’ needs and expectations, through a primary care practice that uses proven ‘best practices’ and is accountable for the results, outcomes are better and costs are lower,” he concluded. “Through the Comprehensive Primary Care Initiative, we now have the opportunity to advance this model in practices throughout the country.”

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“Perhaps more than any initiative released to date, the new Comprehensive Primary Care Initiative takes critical steps to help us achieve the kind of comprehensive, patient-centered primary care that patients and families want and need,” said Debra L. Ness, president of the National Partnership for Women & Families and leader of the Campaign for Better Care. “Too often today, patients – and particularly those who are sicker, older and have multiple chronic conditions – struggle in a system that doesn’t coordinate care, promote prevention, or use its resources wisely, and doctors also grow frustrated because they are unable to provide the quality, coordinated care their patients need.”

“The new initiative recognizes the importance of simultaneously encouraging practices to redesign themselves in ways that will improve care for patients, while providing the payment support and

alignment that can make such change possible,” Ness continued. “We are especially pleased that this initiative will promote patient engagement and use patient and family experience of care to assess its effectiveness. Comprehensive primary care must be the foundation on which we build as we transform our health care system. With this initiative, the Department of Health and Human Services is pointing the way to better care, healthier communities and better value for our health care dollars. We commend the Department for this promising new program. Consumers and doctors share the goal of making the system work better and this initiative lends itself to such a partnership. Consumers and physicians can and must work together to ensure its success.”

The American College of Physicians (www.acponline.org) is the largest medical specialty organization and the second-largest physician group in the United States. ACP members include 133,000 internal medicine physicians (internists), related subspecialists, and medical students. Internists specialize in the prevention, detection, and treatment of illness in adults. Follow ACP on Twitter (www.twitter.com/acpinternists) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/acpinternists).

The National Partnership for Women & Families is a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy group dedicated to promoting fairness in the workplace, access to quality health care, and policies that help women and men meet the dual demands of work and family. More information is available at www.nationalpartnership.org.