

**For Immediate Release  
June 13, 2007**

**Contact: Suparna Dutta  
[sdutta@acpm.org](mailto:sdutta@acpm.org)  
202.466.2044x111**

---

## **American College of Preventive Medicine Applauds IOM Report on Training Public Health Physicians**

### **Landmark Study Makes the Case for Building a Robust Pipeline of Public Health Physicians**

**Washington, D.C.** – The American College of Preventive Medicine (ACPM) today applauded the recent release of the Institute of Medicine report, "Training Physicians for Public Health Careers," praising the report as a major milestone for preventive medicine and public health from one of the most prestigious voices in medicine. The report calls on Congress to stem the tide of America's eroding preventive medicine and public health workforce.

The report reflects an in-depth examination by the Committee on Training Physicians for Public Health Careers of the role and need for public health physicians, what these physicians need to know, how to ensure an adequate supply of these physicians, and how to fund the training of these physicians.

The report recommends a doubling of the estimated 10,000 public health physicians currently in practice and specifically calls for expansion and addition of Public Health/General Preventive Medicine residency programs to graduate a minimum 400 additional residents each year. The report also recommends that Congress fund a comprehensive enumeration of the public health workforce in order to project needs for public health physicians and public health education programs.

Noting that "Reliable financial support of physician education and training in public health is lacking," the IOM Committee recommends the U.S. Congress fund a comprehensive educational strategy to assure an adequate number of public health physicians. Such a strategy should include funding for residency training in preventive medicine that parallels funding streams for graduate medical education in other medical disciplines, as well as reinstatement and growth of funding health professions training programs under Title VII of the Public Health Service Act.

ACPM President Michael D. Parkinson, MD, MPH, FACPM, praised the committee for its "breakthrough work, long overdue, bringing together many important pieces to a very complex puzzle." Dr. Parkinson added, "Making the 'blue ribbon case' for seeing preventive medicine residency training as an underutilized yet valued national resource in need of new emphasis and federal support has been convincingly made."

Preventive medicine physicians have unique expertise in assessing and responding to the health needs of the population, including the threats of infectious and chronic diseases, occupational and environmental health issues, and behavioral and socioeconomic determinants of community health. Preventive medicine residency training programs thus address a critical need for leadership at the local, state, and national levels across a wide

spectrum of issues threatening the health of our nation.

Congress has already taken the first step toward addressing some of the IOM recommendations with the recent introduction of the "Preventive Medicine and Public Health Training Act," S. 1120, by Senators Tom Harkin (D-IA), Johnny Isakson (R-GA), Joseph Lieberman (I-CT), and Jeff Bingaman (D-NM). This bill works to address the present inequity in funding by calling on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to establish a competitive grant program that would provide federal support directly to preventive medicine residency training programs. The legislation further stipulates that preventive medicine residents should also rotate through community health centers to provide additional clinical and population-based services to underserved communities.

The decline in the number of preventive medicine specialists is a direct function of inadequate and shrinking funding sources available to offset residency training costs. "During a time of growing public health threats from emerging infectious diseases, bioterrorism, and natural disasters, the IOM should be lauded for their attempts to strengthen our nation's public health infrastructure and to reverse this troubling trend," said Dr. Parkinson.

To view a full copy of the IOM Report "Training Physicians for Public Health Careers," use the following link: <http://www.iom.edu/CMS/3793/33137/43413/43416.aspx>.

###

### **About the American College of Preventive Medicine**

The American College of Preventive Medicine is the national professional society for physicians who specialize in disease prevention and health promotion. ACPM's 2,000 members are engaged in preventive medicine practice, teaching and research. ACPM advocates for the specialty of preventive medicine and for national policies that promote health and prevent disease. ACPM maintains an active presence on Capitol Hill and among the many federal agencies and non-governmental organizations that shape national health policy.