



Year End Review: Physicians Foundation 2016 Initiatives

President's Corner



In 2016, the Physicians Foundation worked to empower physicians to lead in the delivery of high-quality, cost-efficient care during a transitional time for our country when many physicians and patients are uncertain about the future of our healthcare system.

The Foundation, under the leadership of Walker Ray, MD, President and Tim Norbeck, CEO, showed its support through a combination of research, grantmaking and leadership education efforts to bolster the voice of practicing physicians. Below is a snapshot of this powerful work over the past year.

Research Initiatives

The Foundation funded research to better understand and address the unmet needs in the evolving healthcare industry. Major initiatives included the Foundation's first patient survey and fifth biennial physician survey, as well as the release of [*Poverty and the Myths of Health Care Reform*](#), a book that focuses on the impact of social determinants in healthcare delivery by our late colleague Richard Cooper, MD.

Patient Survey

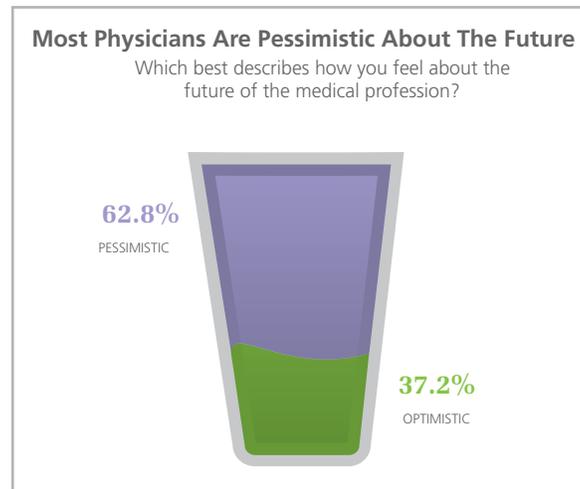
As physicians, our duty is to provide our patients with the best possible care. The [2016 survey of patients](#) revealed that despite the pressures physicians face, nine out of 10 survey participants report they are satisfied with their primary care physician. However, out-of-pocket costs and insurance issues are creating an ever-growing financial burden, threatening consumer access to adequate healthcare.

The survey was covered in several media articles. The Wall Street Journal reported data that many Americans skip medical treatment because of the costs associated with the visit and USA Today highlighted Foundation data showing the majority of patients are concerned they will not be able to pay for medical treatment if they get sick or injured.

Physicians Survey

The [2016 Survey of America's Physicians](#), now in its fifth edition, collected data from more than 17,000 physicians across the U.S. who reported increasing pressure on their medical practices from issues such as intensified regulatory burdens, diminished time with patients, the shrinking physician workforce and difficulties with access and reimbursement. The findings made it clear that the new administration must engage with and listen to physicians to begin course correcting a strained healthcare system.

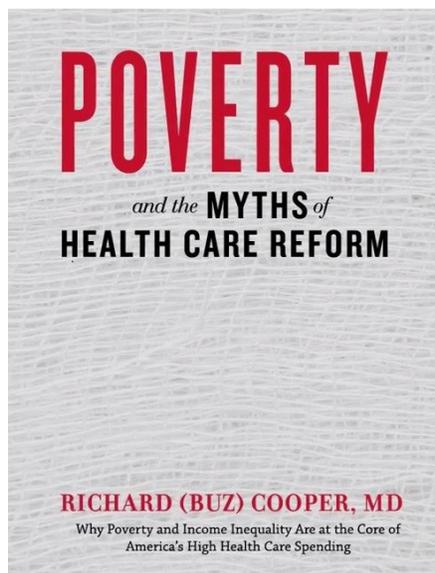
For additional commentary about the survey, read [this](#) article from Walker Ray, MD and Tim Norbeck, on the [Foundation's Forbes Channel](#).



Source: *The Physicians Foundation's 2016 Survey of America's Physicians*

To date, there have been more than 150 articles published highlighting the physician survey results. Top-tier media hits included the Associated Press and a [Crain's New York article](#) focused on how New York City physicians are struggling to stay independent.

Book Release



The Physicians Foundation proudly supported the launch of [Poverty and the Myths of Health Care Reform](#), a thought-provoking and data-rich book that documents the impact of social determinants on healthcare costs. The book, by the late Richard Cooper, MD, was commissioned by the Physicians Foundation, as it aligns with our mission to empower physicians to lead in the delivery of high-quality, cost-efficient healthcare. An overview of the book's premise can be found in this [video](#) featuring commentary from Foundation Board member, Joseph Valenti, MD, and other colleagues.

The book, released in September 2016, is published by [Johns Hopkins University Press](#). The Foundation aims to generate a discussion among healthcare stakeholders about this critical issue and collaborate with Johns Hopkins University Press to encourage professors to add the book to healthcare policy courses.

Grantmaking Activities

In 2016, the Physicians Foundation invested \$5 million to support grants that empower physicians in their delivery of care. It continued to fund diverse grants to drive physician leadership by ongoing support for Health Leads, the UNC FutureDocs Tool, a conference by Brandeis University and a host of other organizations highlighted on the Foundation's [Grantee Perspective](#) webpage.

For more information on applying for grants or the portfolio of grants the Foundation has previously awarded, visit Physiciansfoundation.org/healthcare-grants.

Health Leads

The impact of poverty on the healthcare system is undeniable. For the past 20 years, [Health Leads](#), a social enterprise that envisions a healthcare system that addresses all patients' basic resource needs as a standard part of quality care, has been laser focused on designing and implementing social needs programs in clinical settings. In 2016 the Foundation's grant was used to continue the physician-led research efforts of Health Leads including the publication of research at Massachusetts General Hospital. Over the course of the year, Health Leads also developed its Roadmap tool, used to guide hospitals and clinics in launching, expanding and scaling programs to address patient social needs. Health Leads was also able to develop a free patient screening toolkit that was released in July 2016. Since the launch it has been downloaded by nearly 2,000 users at over 1,500 unique healthcare organizations across 50 states.

To learn more about the impact of poverty on healthcare, and how it needs to be addressed, check out [this post](#) by Damon Francis, MD Chief Medical Officer, Health Leads, on the Physicians Foundation Forbes channel.

UNC FutureDocs Tool

As the physician shortage discussion continues, resources like University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's [FutureDocs Forecasting Tool](#) are more important than ever. In 2016, the Physicians Foundation helped fund this important initiative.

FutureDocs is a critical resource for health systems, hospitals, physician offices, specialty societies and policymakers to find up-to-date, evidence-based forecasts about which types of health services will face shortages in particular geographies. Armed with this information, stakeholders are using the model to determine which service lines should be expanded and what types of physicians to recruit to meet forecasted shortages.

In 2016, UNC shifted its focus to educating users about how to use the FutureDocs Forecasting Tool by adding in new scenarios. This included updating the model's data to highlight where physicians will be needed in the future based on retirement rates, where residents-in-training and actively practicing physicians will move and how physicians will need to be distributed based on Congressional proposals to expand GME.

Click [here](#) to view the full Q&A with Erin Fraher, PhD, Assistant Professor, University of North Carolina Family Medicine.

Physician Leadership Conference

The Physicians Foundation, in partnership with Brandeis University, facilitated a conference aimed at building physician leadership curriculum that empowers physicians to navigate today's complex and ever-changing healthcare system.

The conference brought together academics, practicing physicians and representatives from state and county medical societies. The event focused on advancing the work of physician leaders in the most comprehensive, pragmatic and efficient manner possible. Based on the best practices learned at the event, the Foundation continues to provide physician leadership grants to state and county medical societies, reinforcing the commitment to excellence in physician leadership.

Looking Ahead to 2017

The Foundation understands there is much work to be done to equip practicing physicians with the tools, knowledge and insights necessary to serve as influential leaders in today's healthcare environment. We will continue to be a leading voice for practicing physicians by focusing on strengthening the physician-patient relationship and improving the way quality healthcare is delivered to America's patients.

As the U.S. healthcare system continues to undergo major changes, we will be at the forefront to ensure the physician's voice is heard and that their perspectives are considered. We look forward to paving the way for a stronger and reliable healthcare system.