

Historical Match Day 2023 Overshadowed by Worsening PCP Shortage

Primary care is the only healthcare component for which an increased supply is associated with better population health and more equitable outcomes. Despite the significant role that primary care plays in our health system, primary care accounts for a mere 5% to 7% of total healthcare spending.

[The week of March 13, 2023, marked history for family medicine](#), with more than 4,530 positions filled in family medicine—the largest ever—and three medical schools in Michigan achieving a 100% match rate. While we celebrate these milestones, data shows the rate of increase is inadequate to meet the projected demand for primary care. According to the Association of American Medical Colleges, the United States will still need up to 48,000 additional primary care physicians by 2034. In Michigan, we are more than 860 primary care physicians short.

Investing in primary care and the primary care workforce was the focus of a [media roundtable](#) MAFP hosted on March 20, to kick off Michigan Family Medicine Week (March 19-25). In addition, family physicians, resident physicians, and medical students convened in downtown Lansing on March 22 for

[Michigan Family Medicine Advocacy Day](#)

. The need for adequate and sustained funding for two essential primary care workforce programs—MIDOCs and the Michigan State Loan Repayment Program—were among the discussion points between family medicine advocates, legislators, and legislative offices.

At the federal level, AAFP leaders visited Capitol Hill this month to encourage policymakers to invest in programs that bolster the primary care workforce. We're [pleased](#) Congress has reintroduced the Conrad 30 & Physician Access Act, which allows foreign doctors studying in the U.S. to remain following their residency in exchange for practicing in medically underserved areas and ensures timely access to care.

AAFP submitted [testimony](#) for last month's Senate HELP Committee workforce hearing and [responded](#) to the Committee's request for information to identify policy solutions to address the growing health workforce shortages. AAFP's testimony and RFI response outlined several recommendations to invest in the primary care workforce, including:

- Strengthening and investing in federal graduate medical education programs
- Diversifying the physician workforce
- [Addressing the burden of medical student debt](#)
- Supporting physician-led, team-based care and the integration of behavioral health and primary care
- Enacting telehealth policies that extend the capacity of our health care workforce
- Stopping [anti-competitive](#) contracting practices that harm clinicians and patients