



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Osteopathic physicians in family medicine join the Indiana Physician Coalition

INDIANAPOLIS – A new alliance of medical professionals advocating for patient care continues to grow in support among Hoosier physicians. The Indiana Chapter of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (IN-ACOF) has joined the [Indiana Physician Coalition](#).

Since launching in 2020, the coalition's members include many of the largest medical associations and specialty societies in the state and represent the vast majority of nearly 17,000 practicing physicians and 2,000 medical students. Its mission is to educate the public about how physician-led care protects patients from harm, increases access to quality care and helps control health care spending.

"From our experience, patients are best served by teams of medical professionals who work together to deliver the highest level of care – when that team is led by a physician," said Rachel Shockley, DO, president of IN-ACOF. "We're proud to join our fellow colleagues in the Indiana Physician Coalition to advocate for physician-led care."

One of the founding members of the coalition is the Indiana Osteopathic Association (IOA), which represents Doctors of Osteopathic Medicine, or DOs, from all specialties in medicine.

"We appreciate the dedication of our osteopathic family physicians," said Brian Black, DO, president of IOA. "Through our coalition, osteopathic physicians can share our collective expertise to help guide lawmakers on policies that will lead to healthier outcomes for all Hoosiers – and not just our individual patients."

Medical school matters

Patients are often confused by the various titles of medical professions – and sometimes don't even realize DOs are highly trained physicians, even though they complete rigorous structured preparation.

New DOs, the same as their Medical Doctor (MD) counterparts, accumulate up to 16,000 clinical hours by the time they complete their training. It takes seven to 12 years of preparation for practice, including four years of medical school and three to eight years of residency and fellowship training in a medical or surgical specialty.

And yet, in an independent survey of Indiana residents, the coalition found that 1 out of every 4 Hoosiers were not confident that the provider who had seen them over the past few years was a

physician, DO or MD, rather than an advanced practitioner such as a nurse anesthetist (CRNA) or nurse practitioner (APRN).

“Regardless of this confusion, Hoosiers trust Indiana physicians to manage their health care,” said Dr. Black. “A recent survey from around the state found that more than 3 out of 4 citizens over the age of 40 feel that physicians should have primary responsibility for leading and coordinating their health care. It’s no surprise that they want oversight by a professional with the highest level of training and preparation —and that’s a physician.”

Other findings of the quantitative survey include:

- **83%** of Hoosiers believe physicians and nurse practitioners need to work in a coordinated manner to ensure that patients get the care they need.
- **76%** of Hoosiers believe in the event of a medical complication or emergency, a physician's education and training are necessary to ensure patient safety.
- **73%** of Hoosiers believe nurse practitioners treating patients with one or more chronic diseases should be overseen by physicians.

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About Indiana Physician Coalition:

Indiana Physician Coalition is a statewide alliance of medical associations and specialty societies that advocates for physician-led health care to protect patients from harm, increase access to quality care and control health care spending. Visit us on the web at INphysicians.org and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

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