

## **Patient/Physician Confidentiality Resolution**

WHEREAS the AAFP Policy on Patient/Physician Confidentiality states, “The privacy of adolescent minors should be respected. Parents should not, in some circumstances, have unrestricted access to the adolescent’s medical records,”<sup>1</sup> and

WHEREAS AAFP Policy on Adolescent Health Care, Confidentiality further states, “protection of confidentiality is needed to appropriately address issues such as depression, suicide, substance abuse, domestic violence, unintended pregnancy and sexual orientation,”<sup>2</sup> and

WHEREAS AAFP Policy on Adolescent Health Care, Protecting Adolescents states, “A key tenet for all health professionals is to ensure that adolescents have access to the health services they need, including sexual and reproductive health services.” And, while encouraging involvement of parents in adolescent decisions about sexual health, “if communication between the adolescent and parent cannot be facilitated, access to confidential health care for the adolescent patient must be ensured,”<sup>2</sup> and

WHEREAS studies have shown that a majority of minors do involve parents in their reproductive and sexual health care,<sup>3</sup> and

WHEREAS studies have shown that when parental involvement in reproductive and sexual healthcare is mandated, adolescents are less likely to seek out health services and more likely to engage in risk-taking behaviors,<sup>3</sup> now therefore be it

RESOLVED that the New York State Academy of Family Physicians (NYSAFP) agrees to engage its lobbyists in advocacy to prevent the inadvertent violations of confidentiality that occur when health insurance explanations of benefits or medical bills are sent to the home, and further be it

RESOLVED that health insurers be mandated to allow adolescents with coverage to use their health insurance plans to obtain confidential services without triggering reporting that releases their medical information regarding sensitive information to their parents (because this process otherwise inhibits adolescents from seeking health care), and further be it

RESOLVED that the NYSAFP Congress instruct its delegates to the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) to introduce this resolution at the AAFP Congress in Washington D.C. in September 2007.

<sup>1</sup> American Academy of Family Physicians. Policy on Patient/Physician Confidentiality. Available at <http://www.aafp.org/online/en/home/policy/policies/c/confidentialitypatientphysician.html>. Accessed February 28, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> American Academy of Family Physicians. Policy on Adolescent Health Care. Available at <http://www.aafp.org/online/en/home/policy/policies/a/adolescent.html>. Accessed February 28, 2007.

<sup>3</sup> Dailard C, Richardson CT. Teenagers' Access to Confidential Reproductive Health Services. The Guttmacher Report on Public Policy 2005 Nov;8 (4):6-11.