



AcademyHealth

Advancing Research, Policy and Practice

2006 Year in Review

AcademyHealth
Advancing Research, Policy and Practice

Leadership Letter



Building upon previous success and the expertise of our members and staff, AcademyHealth set forth organizational priorities in early 2006 that focused on building the capacity of the

field, increasing awareness of its importance, and identifying issues that constrain the impact of health services research. We are proud to say that we have made significant strides on all three fronts during the course of the year.

AcademyHealth published an important report, *Strengthening the Field of Health Services Research: A Needs Assessment of Key Producers and Users*, which summarized interviews with leading consumers of health services research, that has stimulated plans to convene a summit to assess the health services research workforce needs of the future. In addition, we have created a new Methods Council to guide AcademyHealth's work in the area of professional training and methods development.

Responding to member concerns, the Board also established the Exploratory Committee to Assess the Impact of Funders' Restrictions on Publishing Research to examine

the impact of funders' restrictions on research publication in government contracts. Based on its review, the committee determined that restraints imposed by federal agencies during the contracting process can significantly limit researchers' publication freedoms. The challenge now for the Board is to determine how AcademyHealth might proceed to promote greater transparency and independence in the publication process, while recognizing the objectives of both researchers and funders.

Also in 2006, our national conferences continued to grow in terms of quality, content, and attendance. This year's National Health Policy Conference and Annual Research Meeting offered outstanding opportunities to discuss the role of research in policy and learn from and with colleagues across the practice, policy, and research spectrum.

We are also pleased to report that AcademyHealth is on firm financial footing, and that our reserves are being used to support new opportunities to ensure the growth to the field.

This is an important time for our field. Looking forward, we are excited to continue working with you and all of our members and friends to continue building an infrastructure of education, opportunity, and funding for health services research.



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Project HOPE

W. David Helms, Ph.D.
President & CEO
AcademyHealth

* Affiliations listed are as of Dec. 2006

About AcademyHealth

AcademyHealth is the professional home for health services researchers, policy analysts, and practitioners, and a leading, non-partisan resource for the best in health services research and policy. The organization promotes interaction across the health services research and policy arenas by bringing together a broad spectrum of players to share their perspectives, learn from each other, and strengthen their working relationships.

As the preeminent professional society for health services researchers and health policy analysts, AcademyHealth collaborates with the research community and other key stakeholders to:

1. Support the development of more and better health services research
2. Support the use of the best available research and information
3. Assist health policy and practice leaders in addressing major health challenges

Core activities that support our mission include convening conferences and seminars, providing research support and professional development opportunities, and facilitating knowledge transfer activities. Organizational affiliates and individual members are central to our efforts to advance research, policy, and practice

AcademyHealth seeks to improve health and health care by generating new knowledge and moving knowledge into action.

Serving Health Services Researchers, Policymakers, and Practitioners

At the end of 2006, AcademyHealth's membership included 3,585 individuals and 132 organizational affiliates. Individual members include health services researchers, public policymakers, business decision makers, policy analysts, economists, sociologists, political scientists, consultants, clinicians, and students. Academic institutions, private research organizations, health providers, health plans, health systems, associations, foundations, and government agencies comprise our organizational affiliates.

A Growing and Engaged Membership

AcademyHealth membership continued to thrive in 2006. In testament to our continued focus on and investment in the future of the field, student membership has evolved into a major growth area. Three new student chapters, representing 40 students and faculty were formed at Boston University, The George Washington University, and University of Missouri. Student activities ran the gamut from career development forums to journal clubs, and from recruitment events to fundraising.

Similarly, Interest Groups, now in their third year, have matured into a robust learning and networking vehicle for members and other interested professionals. In addition to the 10 previously established groups five new Interest Groups organized in 2006 (see sidebar; new groups are listed in bold). As of December 31, nearly 4,000 individuals were participating in Interest Groups, sharing learning opportunities, holding substantive annual and bi-annual meetings, and participating in activities such as Web-based discussion forums, mentoring programs, workforce surveys, and workgroup projects.

Understanding and Responding to Member Needs

AcademyHealth conducted its most recent member survey in 2006. Overall, member satisfaction increased from 2003 to 2006. In the survey, members expressed their most pressing professional challenges to be:

- Funding for research (41 percent)
- Grant-writing (39 percent)
- Finding time for dissemination (37 percent)
- Lack of available funding for investigator-initiated research (34 percent)

Also in 2006, in response to AcademyHealth members' concerns, the Board established an exploratory committee to assess the impact funders' restrictions on publishing research. Under the direction of co-chairs Arnie Epstein and Sara Rosenbaum, the committee examined the impact of funders' restrictions on research publication in government contracts. Based on its review, the committee determined that restraints imposed by federal agencies during the contracting process can significantly limit researchers' publication freedoms. The Board is currently working to determine how AcademyHealth might promote greater transparency and independence in the publication process, while recognizing the objectives of both researchers and funders.

Working with Affiliates

Organizational affiliates support AcademyHealth to help build the professions of health services research and health policy. In 2006, seven new organizations became affiliates, bringing the total number of affiliates to 132.

Interest Groups

- Behavioral Health Services Research
- Child Health Services Research
- **Disability Research**
- **Disparities**
- Gender and Health
- Health Economics
- Health Information Technology
- **Health Policy Communications**
- Health Workforce
- Interdisciplinary Research Group on Nursing Issues
- Long Term Care
- Public Health Systems Research
- **Quality**
- **Research Translation**
- State Health Research and Policy

Supporting the Development of More and Better Health Services Research

AcademyHealth strives to augment the ‘supply side’ of the research pipeline by supporting the development of more and better health services research. This effort includes activities to expand the scientific basis of the field, increase the capabilities and skills of researchers, and promote the development of the financial, human, infrastructure, and data resources.

Annual Research Meeting

Each year in June, AcademyHealth convenes an Annual Research Meeting (ARM) to bring together researchers from around the world to share and discuss the latest health services research findings, learn new methods, debate policy issues, and network with colleagues. As the premier forum for health services research, the ARM is a vital component of our efforts to promote and expand the scientific basis of the field. Each year, the ARM presents top-notch content to a wide audience, with much of the content chosen by peer-review and presented by first-time participants.

In addition to the broad scope of the ARM, AcademyHealth also hosts focused adjunct meetings around specific areas of research and/or policy ranging from economics to state-level issues. One example is the annual Child Health Services Research Meeting which provides a unique opportunity for the child health community to build their skills and knowledge by learning about the latest children’s health services research and debating critical policy issues for children. This one-day meeting is co-sponsored by AcademyHealth and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).

Methods Council

In May 2006, AcademyHealth’s Board of Directors appointed a panel of esteemed researchers to serve on the first AcademyHealth Methods Council. Comprised of experts in the variety of fields that represent health services research, its purpose is to assist AcademyHealth in developing strategies for professional development. The Council is currently working to create a Web-based resource that will provide in-depth information on common health services research methods.

2006 Annual Research Meeting at a glance:

- Location: Seattle
- Attendance: 2,139 researchers, policymakers, practitioners and students
- 18 percent of attendees were students and fellows
- More than 46 percent of the program was peer reviewed
- Abstract submissions soared to 1,646 in 2006, a 9 percent increase over 2005
- More than half of the 544 speakers were first-time presenters.

2006 Methods Seminars

AcademyHealth offers professional development opportunities that include 90-minute methods workshops and full-day methods seminars. The following full-day methods seminars were featured before and after the 2006 ARM:

- Introduction to Cost-Effectiveness Analysis
- Introduction to Hierarchical Modeling for Health Services Research
- Introduction to Bayesian Methods
- Powerful Data, Meaningful Answers: Hands-On Training with HCUP
- Estimation of Models with Endogenous Explanatory Variables
- Economic Assessments in Randomized Trials

Career Center

AcademyHealth’s Career Center is an important resource for career advancement in the fields of health services research and health policy. This comprehensive and growing online resource offers access to professional training and job opportunities, fellowships, and continuing education credits. It also brings together employers and job seekers through resume listing and job posting. It is the largest single resource of position listings for health services researchers and health policymakers, receiving more than 10,000 page views each month.

The Career Center also hosts a Directory of Training Programs to identify the finest educational opportunities available both domestically and abroad.

AcademyHealth/NCHS Fellowship

The AcademyHealth/NCHS Fellowship brings visiting scholars in health services research-related disciplines to the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) in Hyattsville, Md. for a period of 13-24 months to conduct studies of interest to policymakers and the health services research community. Fellows have access to NCHS data resources for use in their proposed studies, and also work on collaborative projects with NCHS staff. The Fellowship is sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics and AcademyHealth. The 2006 fellows were Adele Kirk, M.H.A., a doctoral candidate in the School of Public Health at the University of California, Los Angeles and Susan Lin, Dr.P.H., assistant professor in the School of Nursing at Columbia University. Kirk is working on the project, "Recipients of Work Disability: Who, When, and For How Long?" Dr. Lin's project title is, "Trends of Integrating Clinical Preventive Services Into Primary Care."

Needs Assessment of Key Producers and Users

To inform the development of a strategic plan for the field of health services research, AcademyHealth inventoried the perceived infrastructure needs and priorities of more than 30 producers and users of health services research. The report, "Strengthening the Field of Health Services Research: A Needs Assessment of Key Producers and Users," was published in the fall of 2006. As one outcome of this effort, AcademyHealth is now planning a series of invitational summits to assess the field's ability to respond to mounting challenges. The first summit will focus on the field's current workforce capacity and assessment of future needs.

Ethical Guidelines Curriculum Module

Maintaining integrity in generating and disseminate reliable research to inform policy and practice can be challenging as research endeavors become increasingly commercial, take place in a variety of settings, involve various stakeholders, draw on

AcademyHealth thanks the distinguished faculty who lent their expertise to the 2006 full-day methods seminars.

- Jalpa Doshi, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine
- Bryan Dowd, University of Minnesota
- Anne Elixhauser, AHRQ
- Henry Glick, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine
- Rosemarie Hirsch, NCHS
- Christopher Hollenbeak, Penn State College of Medicine
- Joanna Jiang, AHRQ
- Emmett Keeler, RAND/UCLA
- Bryan Luce, The United BioSource Corp.
- Chaya Merrill, Thomson Medstat
- Sharon-Lise Normand, Harvard University
- Daniel Polsky, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine
- Claudia Steiner, AHRQ
- David Vanness, University of Wisconsin Medical School
- Claudia Williams, AZA Consulting
- Herb Wong, AHRQ
- Alan Zaslavsky, Harvard University

multiple funding sources, and involve judgment where bias and personal interests can affect data. Conflicts of interest can easily arise and threaten the integrity and credibility of the research, researchers, funders, and the field as a whole. It is important that researchers be able to identify these conflicts of interest and know how to manage them when they arise.

In 2006, AcademyHealth, with support from the Association of American Medical Colleges and the DHHS Office of Research Integrity, developed a Curriculum Module that can be used by individuals and institutions to evaluate their own behavior, update their policies, educate their trainees, and guide the management of difficult ethical situations. See <http://www.academyhealth.org/ethicalcurriculum/>. The module is

designed to engage the user through a participatory group discussion and includes “ready to use” materials that can be modified for different classroom applications and degree program levels. The module builds upon AcademyHealth’s 2004 report “Ethical Guidelines for Managing Conflicts of Interest in Health Services Research.” See <http://www.academyhealth.org/ethics/>.

AcademyHealth Awards

Each year, AcademyHealth honors health services research and health policy leaders with several prestigious awards, which recognize researchers and research that epitomize the best our field has to offer. Collectively, these awards promote and recognize the important impact health services research has in informing health policy and practice.

The **Distinguished Investigator Award** recognizes individuals who have made a significant and long-lasting contribution to the field of health services research. In 2006, the distinguished investigator Award was presented to **Karen Davis, Ph.D.**, president of The Commonwealth Fund.

The **Alice S. Hersh New Investigator Award** recognizes scholars early in their careers as health services researchers who show exceptional promise for future contributions. **Michelle Mello, J.D., Ph.D.**, associate professor of Health Policy and Law, director of the Program in Law and Public Health at the Harvard School of Public Health, received the 2006 award.

The **Article-of-the-Year Award** recognizes the best scientific work that the fields of health services research and health policy have produced and published during the previous calendar year. **Richard L. Kravitz, M.D., M.S.P.H.** received this award for his lead authorship on “Influence of Patients’ Requests for Direct-to-Consumer Advertised Antidepressants,” which appeared in the April 27, 2005 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. Co-authors are Ronald M. Epstein, M.D., Mitchell D. Feldman, M.D., M.Phil., Carol E. Franz, Ph.D., Rahman Azari, Ph.D., Michael S. Wilkes, M.D., Ph.D., Ladson Hinton, M.D., and Peter Franks, M.D.

The **Dissertation Award** honors an outstanding scientific contribution from a doctoral thesis in health services research. **Benjamin Sommers, Ph.D.**, of Harvard University received this award for his dissertation, “The Dynamics of Public and Private Health Insurance in the United States.”

The **HSR Impact Award** identifies and promotes examples of outstanding research that have been successfully translated into health policy, management, or clinical practice. In 2006, there were two recipients. **Paul Ginsburg, Ph.D.**, president of the Center for Studying Health System Change (HSC) accepted the award on behalf of his colleagues at HSC and lead researcher Kelly Devers of Virginia Commonwealth University, for research that described how the growth of specialty hospitals in selective communities impacted health care outcomes and costs. As a direct result of their research, Congress enacted an 18-month moratorium on new physician-owned specialty hospitals and the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) re-evaluated payment systems to eliminate disproportionate payments that contributed to the proliferation of such hospitals.

Jack Needleman, Ph.D., associate professor in the Department of Health Services, School of Public Health, at the University of California, Los Angeles, and **Peter Buerhaus, Ph.D., R.N., F.A.A.N.**, Valere Potter Professor and Senior Associate Dean for Research, Vanderbilt University School of Nursing, accepted an award for research that established a relationship between hospital nurse staffing and adverse patient outcomes. The research by Needleman and Buerhaus was widely covered by the media and ultimately helped inform the discussion and passage of the Nurse Reinvestment Act, which was signed by President Bush a mere two months after publication of their research in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

2006 Coalition for Health Services Research

AcademyHealth's advocacy arm – the Coalition for Health Services Research – advocates for the health services research community, campaigns for enhanced funding for agencies that support health services research, and works to ensure federal agencies supporting health services research continue to receive congressional reauthorization. To broaden support for health services research and health data, the Coalition provides organizational support for both the Friends of AHRQ and the Friends of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics. These "Friends" groups comprise key stakeholders for health services research and health data, including providers, patients, businesses, academic health centers, universities, and health plans.

In 2006, the Coalition focused heavily on identifying and engaging new champions for the field of health services research, as well as preparing for AHRQ reauthorization. Although reauthorization did not ultimately come to pass, the Coalition did have a series of important meetings with current and former Senators and Representatives that laid a foundation for increased visibility and understanding of the field on Capitol Hill. In these meetings to recruit new congressional champions, Board members and leaders from our field communicated the value of health services research and discussed both AHRQ reauthorization and legislation that would strengthen the federal government's capacity to conduct and disseminate comparative effectiveness research.

During these meetings the Coalition identified a need for a more compelling case for the field of health services research. In response, the Coalition and AcademyHealth Boards of Directors developed a Framework for Health Services Research Policy for 2007 that outlines our vision, objectives, and policy priorities for the field of health services research. The framework highlights five policy priorities of critical importance, including:

- Fair and transparent access to information
- The next generation of health services researchers
- Advancement of scientific discovery and expansion of knowledge
- Broad-based and adequate funding for comparative effectiveness research
- Accountability through a Coordinating Council for Health Services Research

Based on responses to AcademyHealth's Member Survey, the Coalition's Web site was redesigned in 2006. In addition to including information about the Coalition and its leadership, advocacy activities, and publications, the Web site now includes regular updates on legislation and the appropriations process, advocacy tools and resources, and an "advocacy update" e-mail list serve. Please browse our new Web site by visiting www.chsr.org.

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Letter from the 2006 Chair of the Coalition for Health Services Research

Advocating for Increased Federal Support: The Coalition for Health Services Research



The Coalition for Health Services Research, with support from AcademyHealth members, lobbied Congress in 2006 to increase federal funding for agencies that support health services research (HSR). In these times of competing priorities—war, natural disasters, increasing budget deficits—the appropriations process faced a number of significant challenges. Despite our best efforts, the agencies that support HSR and health data will face another year of flat funding in fiscal year 2007. While less than ideal, flat funding is not a failure; in tight budgetary times, success can be holding funding levels stable. The unified voice of the Coalition and AcademyHealth members—who sent more letters to Congress in 2006 than ever before—helped us achieve this important result.

In preparation for the 110th Congress, the Coalition in 2006 developed a Framework for Health Services Research Policy that includes the following five policy priorities of critical importance to the field:

Fair and Transparent Access to Information: Public data sets should be made readily available to researchers and that policy should prohibit the imposition of excessive prior restraints on the publication of research.

The Next Generation of Health Services Researchers: Increased investments in the field's current and future researchers are needed. Failure to adequately support researchers may result in losing educators and early career researchers to research fields with more support.

Advancement of Scientific Discovery and Expansion of Knowledge: Agencies funding HSR should spend at least as much on a responsive, investigator-initiated research agenda as on pre-specified, earmarked intramural HSR. To expand the knowledge base and discover new ways to improve the health system, we also will need to invest in new methods.

Broad-Based and Adequate Funding for Comparative Effectiveness Research: Congress should increase and expand the sources of funding for conducting and coordinating a wide spectrum of comparative effectiveness research, in-

cluding systematic reviews of existing literature, analysis of administrative data and clinical registries, and pragmatic, prospective, head-to-head trials.

Accountability through a Coordinating Council for Health Services Research: An advisory council comprised of federal sponsors of HSR, private foundations, researchers, business leaders, and consumer advocates should be created to develop a standard definition of HSR, document HSR being conducted by the federal government, and suggest an annual research agenda.

The Coalition will use this framework in 2007 to guide efforts to advocate for, and promote the value of, health services research among policymakers. As a critical component of this advocacy strategy, the Coalition will continue to recruit new “heros”—supportive policymakers in the administration and Congress—to champion our field. We will be looking to new champions on key committees of jurisdiction to help advance our policy priorities through authorizing legislation.

Finally, in 2006 we made it easier for you to contact Members directly and speak out in support of our field by adding new features and organization to the Coalition's Web site. The newly enhanced design responds to feedback from AcademyHealth's Member Survey and promises to offer greater value through regular policy updates and easy-to-use advocacy tools. We encourage you to turn to www.chsr.org for the latest information on the status of federal budget and appropriations, new legislation relative to the field of HSR, and ways in which you can be an effective advocate.

On behalf of the Coalition Board of Directors, I thank you for your support in advancing the field of HSR and communicating its importance to policymakers.

Sincerely,



Charles N. Kahn, III
Chair, Coalition for Health Services Research

Facilitating the Use of the Best Available Research and Information

One of AcademyHealth's greatest strengths is its ability to assist in the translation of research and experience into policy and practice and many of its programs build bridges between these communities.

Changes in Health Care Financing and Organization (HCFO)

AcademyHealth serves as the national program office for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's HCFO program which supports research and policy analysis, evaluation, and demonstration projects examining major changes in health care financing and their effects on cost, access, and quality. HCFO brings together the policy and research communities by convening meetings, translating research, and disseminating findings. In 2006, HCFO distributed \$3,188,767 to support research into the areas of administrative simplification, chronic care, consumer behavior, costs and cost containment, health care markets, health care purchasing, Medicare, mental health, organization and delivery of care, and prescription drugs. HCFO conducts invitational meetings to foster debate and discussion on policy-relevant topics, highlight HCFO-funded research projects, and raise issues worthy of further exploration.

The program also hosts briefings to assist grantees with informal feedback as they complete their work and plan for upcoming dissemination activities. In 2006, HCFO held three invitational working meetings and five grantee briefings. HCFO also supports the dissemination of grantee findings through the publication of Web features, newsletters, and Findings and Issue Briefs. HCFO published seven briefs in 2006, all of which are available at www.hcfo.net.

For a second year, RWJF supplemented the HCFO grant to oversee a new special topic solicitation supporting public health systems research. The solicitation was released in June 2006 and called for projects that would contribute to an enhanced understanding of public health systems. Selected projects encompass the array of public and private entities that engage in activities to promote health and prevent disease and injury at the population level. A total of 54 full proposals were submitted resulting in nine grants for these investigator-initiated research projects in public health systems research.

Knowledge Transfer

Under contract with AHRQ, AcademyHealth develops and implements strategies to assist health care purchasers, health systems leaders, and state and local policymakers in applying research-based evidence to policy and program development. Major project areas include a learning network of public and private purchasers on pay for performance and public report cards, a series of dissemination activities that publicize AHRQ products in this area, and a second learning network with Medicaid Medical Directors that has focused on issues such as using evidence in coverage decision-making and strategies to reduce over-utilization of emergency rooms.

International Exchange

International Exchange for health services research and policy seeks to inform U.S. policymaking with research and experiences of health systems around the world. The goals of the program are twofold:

- To learn from the experiences of other countries who face similar health system challenges
- Work collaboratively with other nations to solve global health challenges

Health in Foreign Policy Forum

As part of its international exchange efforts, AcademyHealth hosted its second Health in Foreign Policy Forum on February 8, 2006. The Forum brought together 150 participants for an in-depth discussion of the United States domestic and foreign policy responses to the global shortage of health professionals.

International Recruitment of Nurses to the U.S.: Toward a Consensus on Ethical Standards of Practice

In August 2006, the MacArthur Foundation awarded AcademyHealth a two year grant to examine the growing practice of international nurse recruitment in the U.S. and to develop guidelines that seek to reduce the harm and increase the benefits of international nurse recruitment for source countries and migrant nurses. During 2006, AcademyHealth established an advisory committee with representatives from multiple stakeholder groups, including hospitals, recruiters, nurse migrants and nurse asso-

ciations and began the process of gathering information on how the industry operates, as well as the varied experiences of migrant nurses themselves.

National Health Policy Conference (NHPC)

The NHPC, held in Washington, D.C. each February provides participants with a health policy preview of the year ahead, as experts from the administration, academia, and the health industry share insights on critical health care issues.

The 2006 NHPC was held February 6-7, 2006. Plenary sessions featured top-level speakers from the administration and Congress including, CMS Administrator, Mark McClellan, AHRQ Director Carolyn Clancy, and representatives of the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Health and the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. In breakout and plenary sessions, experts addressed a broad range of policy issues including Pay for Performance, Medicaid reform, health savings accounts, Medicaid Modernization Act implementation, post-Katrina health system rebuilding, patient safety, technology, and more. In addition, the 2006 NHPC marked the first time AcademyHealth offered adjunct meetings to this conference. Adjunct meetings brought policymakers and researchers together to discuss state health research and policy, child health and public health systems research.

Forum and Frontlines

Under contract to the Veterans Administration (VA) and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), AcademyHealth acts as editor and publisher of the *Forum* and *Frontlines* newsletters, respectively. Each issue of *Forum* features a different area of research and how it translates into quality health care for veterans. *Frontlines* focuses on specific topics linking alcohol services research and its affect on policy. Both serve as key dissemination vehicles, sharing information with key internal audiences and with AcademyHealth members.

Long-Term Care Colloquium

The third annual Long-Term Care Colloquium, sponsored by The Commonwealth Fund and conducted by AcademyHealth, was held in Seattle on June 24 in conjunction with AcademyHealth's Annual Research Meeting. The colloquium provided

2006 National Health Policy Conference At-A-Glance

Conference Attendance:	649
Speakers:	57
Plenary Sessions:	7
Breakout Sessions:	9
Press attendance:	18

Media coverage:

- UPI: Economist Bashes Bush HSA Proposal
- UPI: Pay for performance still sketchy
- *CQ Healthbeat*: Deeper Passions Likely to Color 2006 Health Care Tableau
- Center for American Progress (blog): Pay for Performance
- Center for American Progress (blog): What do Americans think about health spending?
- Center for American Progress (blog): National Health Policy Conference

an opportunity for long-term care (LTC) stakeholders to forge an agenda and bring information to bear on the problems faced by LTC policymakers and practitioners. Building on the momentum generated by the 2004 and 2005 Colloquia, the 2006 Colloquium highlighted two new policy topics:

- 1) Technology and long-term care
- 2) Transitions in long-term care settings

Russell Bodoff, executive director of the Center for Aging Services Technologies (CAST), and Mary Naylor, Ph.D., R.N. of University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing presented highlights from background papers on this year's topics.

Assisting Policy and Practice Leaders to Address Health Challenges

AcademyHealth works with decision makers to help resolve critical health issues. Whether providing direct technical assistance, offering educational programs to improve communication and translational skills, or identifying areas where research is needed, these activities improve the ability of policymakers to improve health and health care. Technical assistance provided by AcademyHealth is based upon state-of-the-art research as well as experiential knowledge.

State Coverage Initiatives

AcademyHealth serves as the National Program office for State Coverage Initiatives (SCI), a national program of RWJF which provides technical assistance to state policymakers' efforts to maintain and expand health insurance coverage. SCI convenes national and regional workshops, publishes in-depth analyses of state coverage strategies, and offers tools and resources to state officials. In 2006, SCI hosted a variety of meetings for state officials and/or related stakeholders. Its annual summer workshop for state officials brought together approximately 125 state officials representing 41 states to address coverage issues and discuss lessons learned from the Federal State Planning Grants administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration. Two new invitational programs for interested states were offered:

- The Reinsurance Institute – A program designed to share knowledge about reinsurance among a network of states that are seriously considering the development and design of this type of program as a strategy to expand coverage. Seventeen states participated in the overall Institute with 10 states applying for additional state-specific modeling resources that were available to only three states.
- Workshop on Policy Analysis and Communication Skills – A workshop presenting a systematic approach for analyzing complex policy issues and a framework for assessing the logic of particular programs or policy options.

In addition, SCI published regular Issue Briefs, state profiles and other reports – both in print and on the Web – designed to share lessons and research among state pol-

SCI at a Glance

Meetings:

- Is There Competition in Your State Insurance Market? Does it Matter and What Can You Do About It? *October 2006*
- Summer Workshop: State Innovations in Health Coverage *August 2006*
- The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005: Implications and Opportunities for State Coverage Efforts *June 2006*
- State Coverage Initiatives National Meeting *February 2006*

Publications:

ERISA Implications for State Health Care Access Initiatives: Impact of the Maryland “Fair Share Act” Court Decision *November 2006*

Major Changes in Benefit Design: A Plausible Way to Control Costs? *November 2006*

The Pennsylvania Community Health Reinvestment Agreement: Establishing Non-Profit Insurers’ Community Benefit Obligations *August 2006*

Medicaid HIFA Waiver Comparison: Arkansas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma *Summer 2006*

Turning Medicaid Beneficiaries into Purchasers of Health Care: Critical Success Factors for Medicaid Consumer-Directed Health Purchasing (Issue Brief) *August 2006*

Uncharted Territory: Current Trends in Section 1115 Demonstrations *March 2006*

Turning Medicaid Beneficiaries into Purchasers of Health Care: Critical Success Factors for Medicaid Consumer-Directed Health Purchasing (Monograph) *January 2006*

State of the States, Finding their Own Way *January 2006*

Assisting Policy and Practice Leaders to Address Health Challenges

icymakers. Chief among these is the annual “State of the States” report, which documents state efforts to expand health coverage and identifies trends and challenges based on state experiences. The report is a key vehicle for raising the visibility of state efforts to cover the uninsured. Media coverage in 2006 included references by the Associated Press, *USA Today*, *Modern Healthcare*, *CQ Healthbeat*, and *AHA News Now*. Both the Kaiser Family Foundation and The Commonwealth Fund distributed information about the report via their publications and list serves. In addition, the Associated Press article was reprinted by more than 50 different media outlets alone.

Health Policy Orientation

This annual, three-and-a-half day program is hosted by AcademyHealth with partial support from the National Center for Health Statistics. The course provides a behind-the-scenes look at policymaking in Washington, including an in-depth understanding of formal and informal policy-making processes and the players who shape health policy. As in previous years, this popular program was booked to capacity with participating health policy fellows, analysts, public officials, federal and state government employees, private sector health care employees, and consultants.

Mini-Courses in Health Policy Tools & Techniques

Designed for policy professionals of all levels, these half-day sessions provide insights into different aspects of understanding and translating research. Mini-courses are typically held in conjunction with the NHPC. In 2006, 78 professionals participated in sessions that included:

- Program Evaluation for Non-Researchers—An overview of the basic concepts and models of program evaluation, with use of case studies to demonstrate the application of these models.
- How to Communicate with Decision Makers: Using Technical Information to Inform Health Policy—A review of essential communication skills such as crafting a message, knowing the audience, and creating a successful strategy, as well as more advanced techniques such as conveying research results to policymakers.

Our thanks to the Orientation Faculty:

- Joe Antos, American Enterprise Institute
- Cybele Bjorklund, House Committee on Energy and Commerce
- Mollyann Brodie, Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation
- Kathy Buto, Johnson & Johnson
- Helen Darling, National Business Group on Health
- Pattie DeLoatche, Office of Senator Orin Hatch
- Jack Ebeler, Alliance of Community Health Plans
- Liz Fowler, WellPoint, Inc.
- W. David Helms, AcademyHealth
- James Hodge, Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health
- Chris Jennings, Jennings Policy Strategies, Inc.
- Chip Kahn, Federation of American Hospitals
- Jeanne Lambrew, The George Washington University
- Marie Michnich, Institute of Medicine
- Robert Moffit, Heritage Foundation
- Marilyn Moon, American Institutes for Research
- Michael J. O’Grady, National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago
- Paul Posner, George Mason University
- Sara Rosenbaum, The George Washington University
- John Rother, AARP
- Julie Rovner, National Public Radio
- Diane Rowland, Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation
- Kelly Vogel, America’s Health Insurance Plans
- Marina Weiss, The March of Dimes Foundation
- Joel White, House Committee on Ways and Means
- Claudia Williams, AZA Consulting

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Health Policy in Action

With support from Kaiser Permanente, Academy Health launched Health Policy in Action!, a new work-study opportunity for health policy professionals in the federal government. Participants, who apply and are chosen by selection committee, develop a program around their policy priorities and interests and study in residence at health care organizations outside of the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. This program creates a unique opportunity to better understand the impact of national health policy on state, local, and community organizations providing health care services and helps broaden “real-world” perspective to inform decision-making. In 2006, K.C. Decker, program analyst, Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Public Health and Emergency Preparedness and Oliver Kim, health and social policy legislative assistant, Office of Senator Debbie Stabenow, were chosen for the program. Decker will travel to the Delta region to review after action reports created for and by the Louisiana Hospital Association, affected private hospital groups, and other commu-

nity health care organizations. Kim will explore the barriers to, and implementation of, health information technology in provider settings.

HSRProj

HSRProj is a unique database that provides information about health services research grants and contracts that are still in progress. As the National Library of Medicine contractor, AcademyHealth and its subcontractor, the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research, have been successfully managing HSRProj since its inception in 1994. Currently, there are over 1,200 active and 15,000 archived projects in this searchable database. In 2006, AcademyHealth developed and disseminated two user prototypes designed to alert the research and policy communities to the existence and utility of HSRProj. During the two months following the release of the prototypes, visits to the HSRProj homepage increased by 50 percent and 60 percent, respectively, over the same time periods

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