

## January 2025 – MAFP News & Events



### **Pabst Retires and Sends Best Wishes**

The Missouri Academy of Family Physicians has announced the retirement of Kathy Pabst, MBA, CAE. Kathy sends her best wishes to the entire membership with this heartfelt farewell message:

As I began writing a farewell message, I thought about how to frame the message, do I want it to be a letter or article about our successes over the past 10 years? I decided to focus on a letter because I feel the personal connection between myself, the MAFP team, and you, our members, has provided opportunities for growth and acknowledgement of the organization. But the overall theme is that “we” have a great team working together for family physicians and your patients.

The MAFP recently recognized my service as your executive director at the Awards and Installation dinner during the Annual Fall Conference. I was surrounded by my favorite people, my family and MAFP members. I have grown over the years with many of you as role models and mentors. Prior to my time with MAFP, I always aspired to lead a prestigious group and I feel blessed that family medicine chose me.

I am filled with a mix of emotions – very bittersweet. Your unwavering support, friendship, and guidance have been the cornerstone of my service to Missouri’s family physicians. Working alongside such dedicated individuals has been an honor and a privilege.

We’ve made significant progress amplifying the voice of Missouri’s family physicians. We passed legislation creating a preceptor tax credit for primary care, we increased primary care residency slots with general revenue, we increased funding for graduate medical education, and we stood the line on scope of practice issues. We focused on workforce development with our family medicine residents and students. Most recently, we have started the Family Medicine Residency Learning Collaborative which is in the early stages of development. During the same timeframe that COVID-19 was spreading across our state, MAFP became one of the three founding organizations of the Missouri Immunization Coalition.

We have engaged on the national level with members serving on the AAFP board of directors, commissions, and chapter leadership. I served as a member of the AAFP Chapter Executive Advisory Council for three years which supported the collaborative efforts of the AAFP and its 55 chapters. I also served as a member of the Commission on Federal and State Policy which afforded us the opportunity to present our work on new advocacy initiatives in Missouri at the AAFP Family Medicine Advocacy Summit and State Legislative Conference.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to MAFP's past and present volunteer board members, the membership, and partners for embracing and supporting MAFP's vision as we've worked to implement meaningful change. Everything I did for MAFP, I did for you.

While my work at the academy ends, your work continues. Caring for your patients, involved in your communities, and engaged with the Academy. But don't forget about you...take care of you too.

Just to let you know a little about what my future holds, I look forward to spending more time with my family, especially Olivia and William, my grands. While I will miss the daily interactions and the sense of purpose that work provided, I am excited about the opportunities that lie ahead.

In closing, I want to leave you with this thought: *cherish the moments, value the relationships, and never stop learning*. The journey is as important as the destination, and I am grateful for every step of mine.

## Advocacy Day

Join fellow Family Physicians on **February 24-25** at the Courtyard by Marriott in Jefferson City for the 2025 MAFP Advocacy Day. This year's schedule includes a full-day Introduction to Advocacy for New Advocates (including residents and students) on Monday, February 24th, a virtual legislative briefing on Monday evening, and meetings with legislators on Tuesday, February 25th.

Make your lodging reservation at the Courtyard Marriott, 610 Bolivar Street, Jefferson City, MO 65101, (573) 761-1400. Be sure to reference the Missouri Academy of Family Physicians to receive the discounted rate of \$145 per night. The last day to make a reservation in our block is **January 25, 2025**. Any reservations made after that date are subject to availability.

Limited complimentary lodging is available with preference to residents and students. To request a complimentary room, email Bill Plank at [bplank@mo-afp.org](mailto:bplank@mo-afp.org). More information and registration at <https://www.mo-afp.org/advocacy/advocacy-day/>.

## AAFP Government Relations Update

On Tuesday, December 17, Congressional leadership released a legislative package to fund the federal government through March 2025 and it includes several health care provisions the AAFP has been long advocating for. These provisions include:

- A 2.5% increase to the Medicare physician fee schedule conversion factor for one year, which stops short of offsetting the full 2.8% payment cut set to go into effect on January 1, 2025;
- Extension of the advanced alternative payment model incentive payment at 3.53% for one year;
- Extension of the physician work Geographic Practice Cost Index floor of 1.0 for one year;
- 5-year reauthorization of the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education program with funding phasing up to \$300 million by 2029;
- 2-year reauthorization of the National Health Service Corps;
- 2-year reauthorization of community health center funding, phasing up to \$4.6 billion by 2026;
- 2-year extension of current Medicare telehealth flexibilities through 2026;
- 5-year reauthorization of the SUPPORT Act, legislation that authorizes critical programs for opioid use disorder prevention, recovery, and treatment. Also contained in the SUPPORT Act is a legislative fix to the 2022-passed MATE Act which recognizes the AAFP's credit system as an entity that accredits continuing medical education; and
- 2-year reauthorization of the Pandemic and All Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA), which would authorize the Department of Health and Human Services to take necessary steps to prepare for and respond to future public health emergencies.

The AAFP has advocated for Congress to act on these items over the past two years and has issued a statement encouraging Congress to pass this legislation. The goal was to pass this legislation before the December 20 funding deadline. Congressional leadership has asked groups to urge Members of Congress to vote YES on this bill.

If you have any questions about the provisions contained in the package, please contact David Tully, vice president of Government Relations at [dtully@aafp.org](mailto:dtully@aafp.org).

### **New Practical Guide on Advising Patients on Using 988 vs 911**

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has issued a new guide titled [Advising People on Using 988 Versus 911: Practical Approaches for Healthcare Providers](#).

Both healthcare providers and patients have experienced confusion in deciding whether 988 or 911 is appropriate across a range of situations. Understanding the differences between 988 and 911 and being able to communicate these differences to patients in ways that address their

needs and concerns and respect their desired outcomes can help support effective crisis management.

This practical guide encourages and supports primary care, behavioral health, and emergency medical services (EMS) providers to integrate crisis care discussions into routine practice. Through intentional, informative conversations with patients about crisis care and the appropriate use of 988 and 911, providers can assess their patients more holistically and educate them and their trusted networks about available crisis care options.

To support these conversations in daily practice, this guide provides practical steps and real-world scenarios. Both are grounded in research emphasizing the importance of early intervention and clear communication in improving crisis outcomes and reducing reliance on emergency response systems. The guide includes sample crisis intervention scripts, grounding exercises, and deep breathing techniques to support crisis de-escalation.

For questions, contact SAMHSA at (877) 726-4727 or visit [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov).

## **Plank Announced as Executive Director**

The Missouri Academy of Family Physicians has announced the promotion of Bill Plank, CAE to the position of Executive Director as the successor to the retiring Kathy Pabst, MBA, CAE. In this new capacity, Plank will serve as the chief administrative officer and conduct the activities of the Academy as determined by the Board of Directors. Plank has served as the Assistant Executive Director since joining MAFP in 2020.

Prior to joining MAFP, Plank spent over 15 years in private industry with a focus on the financial services sector where he held several leadership and community-focused roles. Leaning on his community involvement, he realized a passion for association work and made a career switch to serve a greater purpose. Upon joining MAFP, Bill quickly shifted his focus to association and non-profit work earning the Certified Association Executive credential from the American Society of Association Executives and achieving the American Academy of Family Physicians Family Medicine Champion designation. He currently serves as the President-elect of the Missouri Society of Association Executives.

According to MAFP Board Chair, Afsheen Patel, MD of Lee's Summit, *"The MAFP Board of Directors is very pleased to have Bill as our new Executive Director. We are excited for him to use his vast experience to continue great service to our members and advance family medicine. We fully expect he will be an asset in the years to come that allows us to provide our members with the services they deserve while enabling us to achieve our goals as an organization. Bill's ascension to Executive Director is the culmination of a multi-year succession plan to ensure our members benefit from the knowledge and skills acquired over time while ensuring the continued level of excellence Missouri's Family Physicians have come to expect from our organization."*