POLICY STATEMENT

Nondiscrimination in Pediatric Health Care

Committee on Pediatric Workforce

ABSTRACT

This policy statement is a revision of a 2001 statement and articulates the positions of the American Academy of Pediatrics on nondiscrimination in pediatric health care. It addresses both pediatricians who provide health care and the infants, children, adolescents, and young adults whom they serve.

The mission of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) is “to attain optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents and young adults.”1 In support of this mission, therefore, the AAP is opposed to discrimination in the care of any patient on the basis of race, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, veteran status, immigration status, or disability of the patient or patient’s parent(s) or guardian(s). In addition, the AAP supports the right of pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists, pediatric surgical specialists, and other specialist physicians who care for pediatric patients in both educational and practice settings to participate in the delivery of health care without discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, veteran status, immigration status, or disability. Physicians with disabilities who maintain the ability to perform the essential functions of their jobs with or without “reasonable accommodation,” as defined by the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA),2 should not be hindered from participating in such activities.

Regardless of the size of the practice, all pediatricians, whether employers or employees, are encouraged to have nondiscrimination policies and to review all their personnel policies and procedures to monitor how they are implemented to ensure that they do not have an adverse effect on any individual or group.3 If one wishes to air a grievance concerning discrimination on the basis of any of the above-listed factors, they must be able to do so in an environment that is free of prejudice and discrimination so that the matter may be addressed and resolved expediently.

The AAP recognizes the value of diversity among patients and pediatricians and the importance of proactively establishing and adhering to nondiscrimination policies for both pediatricians (as employers and employees) and the patients in their care. The AAP recommends that both public and private insurers provide nondiscriminatory and continuous coverage of pediatric services. Finally, the AAP encourages its members to support these nondiscrimination principles consistently in their interactions with colleagues, patients, and the patient’s parent(s) or guardian(s).
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REFERENCES
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