

Safe Implementation of Ambient Artificial Intelligence Documentation Systems

WHEREAS, ambient artificial intelligence (AI) documentation systems are being rapidly adopted across ambulatory, inpatient, and virtual care settings because they reduce documentation burden and improve clinician efficiency; and

WHEREAS, the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) has previously affirmed that AI should be implemented under physician oversight with appropriate attention to patient privacy, physician liability, and responsible integration into clinical practice; and

WHEREAS, unlike other applications of AI in healthcare, ambient AI documentation systems directly participate in documenting the patient-physician encounter, creating unique implementation challenges that may affect clinical documentation, communication, and physician workflow; and

WHEREAS, early experience with ambient documentation systems has demonstrated meaningful reductions in documentation burden while also identifying documentation errors and other failure modes that underscore the importance of physician review, thoughtful implementation, and ongoing evaluation; and

WHEREAS, experience implementing new medications, medical devices, electronic health records, and other clinical innovations has demonstrated that successful adoption requires ongoing monitoring, learning, and quality improvement to maximize benefits while minimizing unintended harm; and

WHEREAS, no widely accepted implementation framework currently exists to guide the safe adoption, evaluation, and ongoing oversight of ambient documentation systems in family medicine; and

WHEREAS, successful implementation of ambient documentation systems depends not only on the technology itself but also on organizational governance, physician engagement, workflow design, education, and ongoing evaluation; and

WHEREAS, family medicine is practiced across ambulatory, inpatient, rural, urban, academic, and virtual care settings, positioning family physicians to evaluate how emerging technologies affect continuity of care, patient trust, clinical decision-making, and the physician-patient relationship, and to lead the development of practical implementation guidance across diverse practice environments; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the AAFP develop evidence-informed guidance for the safe implementation of ambient AI documentation systems in family medicine that applies principles of patient safety, implementation science, and continuous quality improvement and includes recommendations addressing implementation planning, validation and physician review processes, workflow integration, ongoing performance evaluation, patient safety monitoring, preservation of the physician-patient relationship,

and other practical considerations necessary for the safe adoption of these systems; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the AAFP encourage healthcare organizations implementing ambient AI documentation systems to establish mechanisms to identify, report, analyze, and learn from documentation errors, near misses, and other patient safety events as part of continuous quality improvement; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the AAFP develop recommendations for enhanced implementation safeguards for ambient documentation systems during highly sensitive clinical encounters, including behavioral health, adolescent medicine, reproductive health, substance use disorders, intimate partner violence, and end-of-life care.