



NCAPIP
National Council of Asian
Pacific Islander Physicians

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER PHYSICIANS

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Dr Ghosh's commentary¹ on a national health agenda for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders was a welcome call to action to address the needs of the fastest growing minority population group in America. Dr Ghosh summarized the barriers that prevent improved health outcomes in a population group too often mischaracterized as America's "healthiest" one. In fact, according to the annual health disparities report published by the Agency for Health Care Quality and Research,² Asian Pacific Islanders (APIs) have the highest proportion of worsening quality indicators of any minority group.

Moreover, the disproportionate burden of Hepatitis B, cancer, tuberculosis, and other debilitating diseases that impact the API community will only be exacerbated if we do not act on the recommendations put forward by Dr Ghosh. Among certain Asian ethnicities, the percentage of uninsured is nearly one-third. It is anticipated with Medicaid expansion under the PPACA, there will be more than a 50 per cent increase in the number of APIs who will rely on Medicaid coverage.³ Recommendations put forth by Dr Ghosh will help to address this issue.

One recommendation stands out: "One organization oversees the entire agenda (of API health)." We are pleased to report that the National Council of Asian Pacific Islander Physicians (NCAPIP), a national organization chartered in 2008, actively represents physicians and physician organizations that advocate for and serve API communities. Even though NCAPIP is but one of a limited number of recognized organizations addressing API health issues, we are the only **national API physician organization**. Physician involvement is critical to advancing a sustainable public and professional advocacy platform for the issues that Dr Ghosh identified.

NCAPIP was formed because API physicians were prominent in academia, research, and healthcare delivery, but less so in leadership roles dedicated to addressing API health disparity issues. It provides an API physician voice, a voice that has been too often muted or overlooked in addressing health disparities. It recognizes the need for a coordinated and collaborative approach to carrying out the agenda recommended by Dr Ghosh. NCAPIP is committed to taking an active and productive role in the effort to end healthcare disparities in API populations. NCAPIP looks forward to a further elaboration of the API healthcare agenda and Dr Ghosh's thoughts on next steps going forward.

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¹ Ghosh G. A National Health Agenda for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. JAMA. 2010;304(12): 1381-1382.

² National Healthcare Disparities Report, 2008: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

³ DATA: 2008-2009 March Supplement, Current Population Survey, Kaiser Family Foundation Analyses.