



## *Frequently Asked Questions*

### **Q: *What is the Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease?***

**A:** The Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease (PFCD) is a national, bi-partisan coalition of patients, providers, community organizations, business and labor groups, and health policy experts committed to raising awareness of the policies and practices that save lives and reduce health costs through more effective prevention and management of chronic disease.

The partnership is confronting chronic disease through a three-tiered approach that includes:

- **Educating** the public about chronic diseases and potential solutions for individuals and communities
- **Mobilizing** Americans to call for change in how governments, employers and health institutions approach chronic disease
- **Challenging** policymakers on the health policy changes that are necessary to effectively fight chronic disease

### **Q: *Why was the PFCD created?***

**A:** The PFCD was established to change the way America addresses the leading cause of death and rising health care costs: chronic disease.

Chronic diseases, such as asthma, cancer, diabetes, and heart disease, affect the quality of life for 133 million Americans and are responsible for seven out of every ten deaths in the U.S. – killing more than 1.7 million Americans every year.<sup>1,2</sup>

They are also the primary driver of health care costs – accounting for more than 75 cents of every dollar we spend on health care in this country.<sup>3</sup>

With the aging of the population and rising rates of childhood obesity, it is critical that America addresses chronic disease now. The PFCD seeks to ensure that policymakers, communities, and individuals have the information they need to make the right decisions regarding health and health policy.

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<sup>1</sup> Partnership for Solutions. Chronic Conditions: Making the Case for Ongoing Care. September 2004 Update. Available at: <http://www.rwjf.org/files/research/chronicbook2002.pdf>. Accessed on April 17, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Chronic Disease Overview page. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/overview.htm>. Accessed April 6, 2007.

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Chronic Disease Overview page. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/overview.htm>. Accessed April 6, 2007.



**Q: *How does the PFCD differ from other public health campaigns?***

**A:** By uniting the efforts and voices of diverse groups – patients, providers, community organizations, business and labor groups, and health policy experts – the PFCD is refocusing the fight against chronic disease by promoting a proactive approach to disease prevention and management. In addition to raising awareness among the public, we seek to educate presidential candidates and elected officials on this issue, with the hope that they will help implement public policies to address this problem.

**Q: *How is the PFCD organized? Where does it get its funding?***

**A:** The PFCD is an independent non-profit organization. Its funding comes from its member organizations. Different organizations contribute in different ways -- some through financial contributions and others through in-kind contributions and by lending their expertise to the effort.

**Q: *What are the public policies that the PFCD supports?***

**A:** Currently, our nation's health care system does a better job of taking care of us *after* we are sick than it does keeping us healthy and preventing illnesses. The PFCD seeks to promote public policies that improve Americans' ability to prevent, detect, and manage chronic disease, and that encourage Americans to lead healthier lives. By doing this, we can save lives, improve quality of life, and spend health dollars in a much more effective way.

The PFCD supports common-sense, patient-focused policies and practices and works to:

- Increase access to high-quality health care, including preventive care
- Promote health and wellness
- Help reduce health disparities
- Eliminate bureaucracy in the health system
- Enhance health information and encourage innovation in health

**Q: *What activities does the PFCD have planned and where?***

**A:** The PFCD will bring its expertise to key communities across the country where partners will lead events and forums, localized research efforts on chronic disease, health screenings, consumer education activities, and briefings with policymakers. To find out about PFCD activities taking place in your community, visit [www.fightchronicdisease.org](http://www.fightchronicdisease.org).



**Q: *Who is leading the partnership?***

**A:** The PFCD is led by a bi-partisan advisory board comprised of health care experts, academics, business leaders and policymakers. The advisory board coordinates through Executive Director Ken Thorpe, Robert W. Woodruff Professor and Chair of the Department of Health Policy at Emory University, and PFCD Chairman former Surgeon General Richard S. Carmona.

**Q: *Who is part of the partnership?***

**A:** More than 40 advisory board members and partner organizations from across the nation have joined the PFCD, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the NAACP, Easter Seals, the National Medical Association, Kerr Drug, the American College of Nurse Practitioners, the American Academy of Physician Assistants, American College of Preventive Medicine, Sheet Metal Workers International Association, YMCA of the USA, the Alliance for Aging Research, IHSA, American Pharmacists Association Foundation, the Disease Management Association of America, Integrated Benefits Institute, and the Milken Institute, among others.

**Q: *How does the PFCD measure success?***

**A:** Awareness and action are the two critical things that must take place if we are to reverse a trend that stands to bankrupt our health care system. By making more Americans aware of the magnitude of the problem and how preventable chronic diseases really are, and then moving policy leaders to take steps that encourage the prevention of chronic disease, the PFCD will have fulfilled its mission.

**Q: *How can I, my business, or my community get involved?***

**A:** Many costly chronic diseases could be prevented, delayed, or alleviated through simple changes in behavior and lifestyle.

It's up to us to fight for public policies that encourage us to prevent chronic diseases before they occur.

There are many ways that you can get involved. Write to the presidential candidates and your elected officials urging them to address the true drivers of health care costs – chronic diseases. Spread the word in your community and businesses about the importance of maintaining a healthy life style by eating right, exercising regularly and following up on annual health screenings. And encourage your friends and family to join the fight against chronic disease. For more information on how you can get involved, visit [www.fightchronicdisease.org](http://www.fightchronicdisease.org).



**Q:** *Where can I find more information about the PFCD?*

**A:** For more information and to find out how you can join the fight against chronic disease, please visit [www.fightchronicdisease.org](http://www.fightchronicdisease.org).