

HEALTH MATTERS

Protecting Patients' Rights at the Forefront of Coalition's Mission



Access to quality healthcare is fundamental to the wants and needs of Americans. However, more and more patients are encountering obstacles when it comes to choosing a provider who best suits their needs.

To protect patients' rights to access and select the healthcare providers of their choice, the Coalition for Patients' Rights™, a national coalition of more than 35 organizations representing more than three million healthcare professionals, was formed.

"Patients' rights are at risk right now," said Maureen Shekleton, a spokesperson for the Coalition for Patients' Rights. "We know patients are best served when they have access to a team of healthcare professionals who work together to ensure overall health and wellness."

Currently, there is a divisive movement by some medical groups to restrict the valuable services provided by some healthcare professionals who are not doctors of medicine or osteopathy (MDs or DOs), which will limit patient access to safe, high-quality and cost-effective healthcare.

This coordinated effort aims to limit the range of healthcare-related activities and services

provided by many professionals, including psychologists, registered nurses and advanced practice registered nurses, physical therapists, naturopathic physicians and many others.

"Patients rely on the many and varied health services provided by the professionals represented by the Coalition for Patients' Rights," Shekleton continued. "Access to a range of healthcare options ensures that patients are able to choose the right care at the right time."

The Coalition for Patients' Rights was established in 2006 to ensure that the growing needs of the American healthcare system can be met. This includes working to protect the rights of its members to practice to the full extent of their abilities, education, qualifications and legal authority.

"Patients have a right to access the healthcare provider of their choice," stated Shekleton. "If your insurance company does not cover the provider you prefer, we encourage you to ask them why."

To learn more about the important role all healthcare professionals play in addressing America's healthcare needs, visit www.patientsrightscoalition.org.