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RIGHTS, ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS OF CHOICE AT RISK

Coalition Works to Ensure Access, Quality Healthcare for All Americans

WASHINGTON – Today the [Coalition for Patients' Rights](#)[™] announced that it has sent a [letter](#) to President Obama urging him to support the utilization of a broad spectrum of health professions as the Administration works to reform the nation's healthcare system. In its correspondence to the White House, the Coalition reiterated its position that healthcare professionals – who are not doctors of medicine or osteopathy (i.e., MDs or DOs) – are critical stakeholders in healthcare reform.

Additionally, the Coalition – which is comprised of more than 35 member organizations – has launched a national public education initiative to help people better understand the broad spectrum of healthcare providers available to them and to reinforce the importance of maintaining their right to access the providers and care of their choice. Healthcare providers other than MDs or DOs are well-prepared to provide a diverse array of safe, high-quality and cost-effective services to meet the growing healthcare needs of Americans. In fact, many of these professions evolved to fill gaps in healthcare services and to provide other benefits not offered by MDs or DOs, including a higher degree of personalized care, specialty services, greater accessibility and increased affordability.

“We want to remind patients that they have a choice of healthcare providers and that medical doctors should not always be the default provider for healthcare,” said Maureen Shekleton, PhD, RN, FAAN, a spokesperson for the Coalition for Patients' Rights. “Right now, patients can choose to see the provider of their choice, whether that provider is a nurse, a psychologist, a therapist or a naturopathic physician. But given the present environment, this may not always be the case.”

Currently, there is a divisive movement to restrict the valuable services provided by some healthcare professionals, which will limit patient access to safe, high-quality and cost-effective healthcare. As indispensable caregivers to millions of Americans, the healthcare professionals represented by the Coalition are continually defending their right to offer services that they are both licensed/certified and qualified to provide.

“Access to healthcare should be based on patient safety, efficacy and positive outcomes, not provider policies and compensation battles. It’s not fair for patients to be stuck in the middle of a turf battle,” continued Shekleton. “Patients are best served when they have access to a team of healthcare professionals who work together to ensure overall health and wellness.”

The Coalition advocates for the legally authorized practice rights of its members to ensure continued services for the patients who rely on them. Limiting the ability of healthcare professionals to practice and provide appropriate care places an enormous and unnecessary burden on the American healthcare system. Without the contributions of these professionals, many patients would lack essential healthcare services and options, especially those in rural and medically underserved areas.

The Coalition urges consumers to learn more about the expertise and qualifications of its membership and to consider the role these professionals play in America’s healthcare system. To learn more, visit www.patientsrightscoalition.org.

About the Coalition for Patients’ Rights

A national coalition of more than 35 organizations, the Coalition for Patients’ Rights represents more than three million licensed and certified healthcare professionals committed to ensuring comprehensive healthcare choices for all patients. It was formed in 2006 in response to divisive efforts by The Scope of Practice Partnership (SOPP), a coalition of medical and osteopathic physician organizations established by the American Medical Association (AMA) and other medical groups, which aims to limit other healthcare professionals’ scopes of practice.

The Coalition is comprised of a diverse array of healthcare professionals, including optometrists, chiropractors, psychologists, registered nurses and advanced practice registered nurses (including certified registered nurse anesthetists, nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists

and certified nurse midwives), therapists, naturopathic physicians, practitioners of Oriental medicine and many other licensed and certified professionals. For more information about the Coalition for Patients' Rights, visit www.patientsrightscoalition.org.

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