

February 27, 2009

ACTION ALERT!

Medicare Respiratory Therapy Initiative Act of 2009

The Medicare Respiratory Therapy Initiative Act of 2009 has been introduced in the House and the Senate. HR 1077 and S 343 will recognize Respiratory Therapists under Medicare Part B and expand patient access to care. These bills will allow Qualified Respiratory Therapists to provide care outside the hospital under the general supervision of a physician. This legislation is strongly supported by the American Association for Respiratory Care. You can also sign a petition in support of the House bill HR 1077 and Senate Bill S 343.

How you can help

Please contact your Representative or Senator and ask them to co-sponsor H.R. 1077 or S. 343.

1. Visit www.congress.org and enter your zip code in the small box at the top and click "GO". The next page will direct you to your representative.
2. Call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and ask for your representative's office. Remember that telephone calls are usually taken by a staff member, not the member of Congress. Ask to speak with the aide who handles the issue about which you wish to comment.
3. After identifying yourself, tell the aide you would like to leave a brief message, such as: "Please tell Representative or Senator (Name) that I support H.R. 1077 or S. 343 and state the reasons why you support the bill.
4. Ask for your representative's position on the bill. You may also request a written response to your telephone call.

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About the Alpha-1 Foundation:

The mission of the Alpha-1 Foundation is to provide the leadership and resources that will result in increased research, improved health, worldwide detection, and a cure for Alpha-1 Antitrypsin Deficiency. For more information, please visit: www.alphaone.org.

About the Alpha-1 Association:

The mission of the Alpha-1 Association is to identify those affected by Alpha-1 Antitrypsin Deficiency (Alpha-1) and to improve the quality of their lives through support, education, advocacy, and research. For more information, please visit: www.alpha1.org.

SAMPLE LETTER – DO NOT PRINT ON ASSOCIATION/FOUNDATION LETTERHEAD

Dear (Representative/Senator),

I am writing to ask you to cosponsor H.R. 1077/S. 343 Medicare Respiratory Therapy Initiative Act of 2009. If this bill is enacted, COPD patients will have a greater access to respiratory therapists. This legislation will recognize Respiratory Therapists under Medicare Part B and expand patient access to care. It will allow respiratory therapists to provide certain services such as smoking cessation, disease management, asthma management and much needed medication education.

It is imperative to support this bill because:

- Respiratory Therapists are the specially trained allied health professionals who treat individuals with chronic lung disease such as Alpha-1 and COPD.
- Medicare payments to the physician would be reduced to an amount based on 85% of the physician's fee schedule instead of 100% of the amount now being paid.
- COPD patients can have more access to qualified respiratory therapists and get the proper care needed, many times eliminating a need for a hospital visit or admission.

(Add your personal story here)

So please support H.R.1077/S. 343 and help us breathe easier knowing that our voices are heard on Capitol Hill.

Sincerely,

Name

Address

Telephone Number