



Supporting Quality Health Care Services at Home

Special Alert

May 13, 2002

Make Plans Now to Meet With Your Congressman During the Memorial Day Recess (May 25 to June 3) – Medicare Reform Bill Markup Plans May Slip to Early June

Although there has been no official announcement, our latest intelligence indicates that the House Ways & Means and Energy & Commerce Committees will not markup Medicare legislation before the Memorial Day recess, as they had previously announced. Protests by providers who stand to be detrimentally affected by the legislation have slowed down the process.

It now appears that the committees will address the legislation in early June, which give us more time to deliver our message to Congressional representatives. In addition to the phone calls to key members of Congress and their staff, AAHomecare is now encouraging all members to schedule an appointment with their local congressional representatives during the Memorial Day recess – May 25 through June 2. Take this opportunity to discuss your concerns about home care industry issues, including:

- the problems with national competitive bidding,
- the importance of eliminating the 15 percent cut – and the effects of a potential added co-pay for home health beneficiaries,
- the need to reimburse services if average wholesale price (AWP) drug payments change, and
- the 10 percent rural add on for home health agencies.

To help you in your efforts, AAHomecare has **position papers** to assist you when discussing these issues with your representative. These materials are located online at <http://www.aahomecare.org/members/position.htm>.

Other **tools for educating Congress**, including a manual on “How to Lobby” is located online at <http://www.aahomecare.org/govrelations/gr-tools.htm>.

Local contact information for all congressional representatives is available online at the **Capitol Connection Web site** at <http://capitol.medgroup.com>.

If you do not succeed in getting a personal appointment with your representative, inquire with the local staff about the possibility of a Town Hall meeting to be held during the recess – another opportunity to voice your concerns about these issues. AAHomecare is currently surveying congressional offices and will be compiling information about any meetings that have been scheduled during this time.

AAHomecare’s Washington Legislative Conference, to be held in Washington, DC from June 5 to 7, will come at a opportune time as lawmakers will be forming their decisions on the Medicare program.

We encourage all members to join us for the opportunity to meet with local representatives and regulatory officials from CMS. More information about the conference is available online at <http://www.aahomecare.org/meetings/legcon2002.htm>.