



The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
United States House of Representatives
235 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
United States Senate
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

July 31, 2009

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Reid:

As members of the Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease (PFCD), we thank you for your leadership in Congress and support of President Obama in making health care reform a priority in 2009.

While health care reform is a complex issue with many different viewpoints, all agree that making quality health care coverage affordable on a sustainable basis is key to making quality health care accessible to all.

We believe that sustainable affordability will not be possible unless we take immediate and bold action to fight chronic disease. Despite all the resources currently being spent on health care in the U.S., millions suffer from preventable, common, and costly chronic health conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and obesity. Their rapid growth causes individual health care costs to soar, undercuts U.S. competitiveness, and threatens Medicare and Medicaid viability.

Spending on patients with one or more chronic diseases now represents more than 75 percent of total spending on health care in the U.S., and even more in Medicare and Medicaid. Until we address the true causes of this crisis, we will never be able to slow spending or make health care more affordable. Nor we will have a workforce – or an economy – that can perform to its fullest potential.

The PFCD, a national and state-based coalition of hundreds of patient, provider, community, business, and labor groups, advocates for comprehensive health reform that controls health care spending through measures that simultaneously reduce costs and improve health outcomes. We believe the following policy proposals would do just that and deserve greater attention when drafting health reform legislation.

- **Include care coordination models in Medicare, such as community health teams.** Because of a lack of care coordination and poor payment mechanisms, Medicare is plagued with high rates of preventable chronic diseases and their complications -- resulting in avoidable hospital admissions and readmissions and other care.



- **Tie Medicare payments to the quality of care received, not the quantity of care.** Studies have shown that more care does not equal better care, and that a strong focus on prevention and effective management of chronic disease has eliminated a great deal of wasteful and expensive spending.
- **Support primary prevention of chronic disease by stimulating growth and participation in workplace, community and school wellness programs.** Evidence-based primary prevention programs that promote healthy behaviors, educate individuals about their health, and empower them to reduce their risk-factors have succeeded in reducing individual health risks and lowering rates of chronic disease.
- **Remove barriers patients face to effective treatment and management of chronic illness.** High out-of-pocket costs for prescribed treatments can make it more difficult for patients to follow their health providers' instructions, particularly for low-income patients. The cost of poor patient adherence to therapy represents a huge missed opportunity; for instance, poor adherence to medication therapy alone has been estimated to cost the U.S. as much as \$300 billion annually.
- **Streamline administrative health care costs to reduce unnecessary spending.** Simplifying and standardizing paperwork, and moving to an electronic-based system where information is available in real time would facilitate chronic care management and care coordination, leading to reductions in costs.

We encourage Congress to support and adequately fund these value-driven, cost-savings measures to ensure the passage of meaningful health reform in 2009.

Thank you, in advance, for your support.

Sincerely,

The 270 undersigned Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease national and state partners (see full list below)

National partners:

AHEAD
Alliance for Aging Research
Alzheimer's Foundation of America
America's Agenda
American Academy of Nursing
American Academy of Physician Assistants
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy

American Association of Diabetes Educators
American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging
American Cancer Society: Cancer Action Network
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Dietetic Association
American Osteopathic Association
American Pharmacists Association



American Sleep Apnea Association
American Society of Addiction Medicine
Arthritis Foundation
Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs
Biotechnology Industry Organization
Community Health Charities
Dialysis Patient Citizens
DMAA: The Care Continuum Alliance
Easter Seals
GlaxoSmithKline
Health Dialog
Healthways
International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association
LULAC
Marshfield Clinic
Medical Fitness Association
Mental Health America
National Alliance for Caregiving
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Business Coalition on Health
National Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity
National Health Council
National Health Foundation
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Latina Health Network
National Patient Advocate Foundation
Novo Nordisk
Ovarian Cancer National Alliance
PILMA
Prevent Blindness America
U.S Preventive Medicine
Southwest Area Manufacturers Association
XLHealth
YMCA of the USA

State Groups:

Arkansas:

American Cancer Society -- Arkansas
Arkansas Association of Charitable Clinics
Being-Well
Harmony Health Clinic

Lupus Foundation of America -- Arkansas

Colorado:

Colorado BioScience Association
American Cancer Society
Colorado Cross Disability Coalition
Colorado Gerontological Society
Mission Medical Clinic
NAMI
Rocky Mountain Stroke Association

Connecticut:

Community Health Charities of New England
The Connecticut Dietetic Association
Connecticut Geriatrics Society
eBenefits Group Northeast, LLC
East Haven Counseling & Community Services
HealthASSIST, a division of Healthtrax Inc.
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society CT Chapter
Ovation Benefits Group
VNA Community Healthcare
Yale University Prevention Research Center

Delaware:

Claymont Community Center
H & S Enterprise, Inc.
Integrated Social Solutions
Jewish Family Services of Delaware
Westside Family Healthcare
William 'Hicks' Anderson Community Center
YMCA of Delaware

Iowa:

Community Health Charities of Iowa
Des Moines WomenHeart
Iowa Academy of Family Physicians
Iowa Biotechnology Association
Iowa Nurses Association
Iowa Pharmacy Association
Lupus Foundation of America, Iowa Chapter
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society; Iowa Chapter
Visiting Nurse Services of Iowa
Witwer Center, Cedar Rapids



Illinois:

Chronic Illness Initiative of DePaul University
Community Health Charities
Gilead Outreach and Referral Center
Illinois African American Coalition for
Prevention
Illinois Alliance for Growth
Illinois Association of School Nurses
Illinois Chamber of Commerce
Illinois Pharmacists Association
Lupus Foundation of America, Illinois Chapter
Mount Prospect Chamber of Commerce
National Alliance on Mental Illness of Greater
Chicago
Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan
Chicago
YMCA of Metro Chicago

Indiana/Kentucky:

Community Health Charities of Kentucky /
Southern Indiana, Brian Jones, Director of
Development
Epilepsy Foundation of Kentuckiana, Debbie
McGrath, Executive Director
Indiana Dietetic Association, Jayanthi Kandiah
PhD, RD CD, President
Indiana Latino Institute Aida McCammon,
President & CEO
Indiana Minority Health Coalition, Nancy Jewell,
President & CEO
St. Vincent Hospital Indianapolis, Sherry Gray,
Director of Rural and Urban Access to Health
The Running Company, Bob Kennedy, Owner

Maryland:

Access Carroll
Coalition for a Healthy Maryland
Community Health Charities of National Capital
Area
Maryland Academy of Family Physicians
Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association
YMCA of Central Maryland

Minnesota:

American Liver Foundation, Great Lakes Division
-- Minnesota
Community Health Charities of Minnesota
Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota
Minnesota Oncology
Minnesota Academy of Family Physicians
Minnesota Pharmacists Association
Minnesota Rural Health Association
NAMI Minnesota
Sabathani Community Center, Minneapolis

New Hampshire:

Advanced Laser Therapy
AIDS Services for the Monadnock Region
Concord Family YMCA
Council for Children and Adolescents with
Chronic Health Conditions
Greater Nashua YMCA
Keene Family YMCA
New Hampshire Advocates for Healthy Youth
National Alliance on Mental Illness New
Hampshire
New Hampshire Fitness Professionals
Association
New Hampshire Recreation and Park
Association

New Jersey:

Action CF!
Arts Plan NJ
Chamber of Commerce Southern New Jersey
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation
Elevator Constructors Local 5
HealthCare Institute of New Jersey
Heat and Frost Insulators Local # 14
Heat and Frost Insulators Local # 32
Heat and Frost Insulators Local # 42
Heat and Frost Insulators Local # 89
IBEW Local # 102
IBEW Local # 164
IBEW Local # 269
IBEW Local # 351
IBEW Local # 400
IBEW Local # 456
InnovationRx



Integrated Healthcare Consultants, LLC
Juvenile Diabetes Awareness Coalition
Mechanical and Allied Crafts Council of New Jersey
New Jersey Alliance of YMCAs
New Jersey Association of Mental Health Agencies, Inc.
New Jersey Business and Industry Association
New Jersey Carpenter Funds
New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute
New Jersey Hospital Association
New Jersey Renal Coalition
New Jersey Society for Environmental, Economic Development
New Jersey State Association of Pipe Trades
New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce
New Jersey State League of Municipalities
New Jersey State Nurses Association
Paradigm Physician Partners
Partners In Care, Corp.
Pipefitters Local 274
Public Utility Construction/Gas Appliance Local 855
Plumbers Local 24
Plumbers and Pipefitters Local # 9
Plumbers and Pipefitters Local # 322
Princeton Partners
Road Sprinkler Fitters 669
Sheet Metal Workers Local # 19
Sheet Metal Workers Local # 22
Sheet Metal Workers Local # 25
Sheet Metal Workers Local # 27
Sheet Metal Workers Local # 137
South Jersey Pharmaceutical and Medical Technology Industry Alliance
Sprinkler Fitters Local # 692
Sprinkler Fitters Local # 696
Steamfitters Local 475

North Carolina:

American Cancer Society
American Lung Association of the Mid Atlantic Region
The Alliance Disability Advocates
The Arc of North Carolina

Autism Society of North Carolina
Dr. Paul Cunningham, Dean, Brody School of Medicine, East Carolina University
Easter Seals UCP-North Carolina
Mental Health Association in North Carolina
Multiple Sclerosis Society
NAMI-North Carolina
NASW-North Carolina
NC Psychiatric Association
NC Psychological Association
Old North State Medical Society, Fayetteville Chapter-Dr. Johnny Williams
Old North State Medical Society, Jacksonville Chapter-Dr. Beverly A. Davis
Partnership for a Drug Free NC

Ohio:

CEBCO Health and Wellness Programs - County Commissioners' Association of Ohio
Central Ohio Diabetes Association
Fairhill Partners
For Your Health Ohio
Kincaid's Kindred Spirits, Inc.
Ohio AFL-CIO
National Kidney Foundation Serving Ohio
The Ohio Asian American Health Coalition
Ohio Dietetic Association
Ohio Nurses Association
Ohio Osteopathic Association
Ohio Public Health Association
Premier Community Health
Prescription Assistance Network of Stark County, Inc.
Prevent Blindness Ohio
Summa Health System
YMCA of Central Ohio

Pennsylvania:

AIDS Community Alliance of South Central PA
American Liver Foundation -- Allegheny Division
American Liver Foundation -- Mid Atlantic Division
National Kidney Foundation Serving the Alleghenies



National Kidney Foundation Serving the
Delaware Valley
Pennsylvania Chiropractic Association
Pennsylvania Council of Churches
Women of Hope & Faith, Inc.

South Carolina:

Ambassador Diabetic Supplies & Services, LLC
Bethel Baptist Church
Bethel Senior Daycare Center
Catholic Charities -- Piedmont Region
Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Inc.
Columbia Hospital Alumni Association
Diabetes Today Advisory Council
Dianne's Call
Eau Claire Cooperative Health Centers, Inc.
Educational Therapy, LLC
Faith Christian Center
Family Outreach Word and Worship Center
Madison Alexander, LLC
Midlands Diabetes Coalition
Mother of Pearl, Inc.
Mt. Zion Baptist Church
Quality of Life Wellness Programs
Ridge Branch Baptist Church
South Carolina Academy of Physician Assistants
South Carolina AFL-CIO
South Carolina Asthma Alliance
South Carolina Pharmacy Association
South Carolina Public Health Institute
South Eastern African American Center of
Excellence for Eliminating Disparities (REACH
U.S. SEA-CEED)

Synalloy Corporation
The Greater Charleston Central Labor Council
Tri-County Black Nurses Association
United Way Association of South Carolina
Vista Smiles
Walterboro Christian Center

Washington:

American Liver Foundation -- Pacific Northwest
Chapter
Bastyr University
Children's Wishes and Dreams
Genelex Corporation
Mt. Si Senior Center
Puget Sound Health Alliance
Washington Health Foundation- Healthiest
State in the Nation Campaign
Washington State Prescription Drug Assistance
Foundation

Wisconsin:

Alzheimer's Association, South Central
Wisconsin Chapter
American Liver Foundation, Great Lakes Division
-- Wisconsin
Community Health Charities of Wisconsin
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America --
Wisconsin Chapter
Prevent Blindness Wisconsin
Wisconsin Academy of Family Physicians
Wisconsin Dietetic Association
Wisconsin Women's Health Foundation

**cc: U.S. House of Representatives, U.S. Senate, White House Office of Health Reform, Senate Health,
Education, Labor, Pensions Committee, Senate Finance Committee, House Ways & Means Committee,
House Energy & Commerce Committee, Kate Leone, Senior Health Counsel, Senator Reid's Office,
Wendall Primus, Policy Advisor, Speaker Pelosi's Office**