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Doctors Gather in DC to Fight for Patient Access to Specialty Care

Alliance of Specialty Medicine gives voice to 100,000 U.S. physicians

WASHINGTON, DC –More than 50 specialty doctors from across the country, representing the [Alliance of Specialty Medicine](#), met in Washington, D.C. today to talk to their members of Congress about the recently passed health care reform law and the need to foster and protect patient access to high quality specialty care.

“As advocates for both patients and physicians, the Alliance is working to ensure that patients are able to access the specialty care they need, when they need it,” said Michael Schweitz, MD, spokesperson for the Alliance of Specialty Medicine and member of the Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations. “We came to Washington today to help our representatives understand the challenges specialty doctors face. We hope that, by working together, we can make sure that patients have access to timely, high quality specialty medical care.”

The specialty doctors were scheduled to meet with nearly 80 Members of Congress, from both sides of the aisle, and provide them with a physician’s view on the health care industry and discuss what can be done to better ensure that patients receive the highest quality of care. Physicians specifically highlighted the need to reform the Medicare physician payment system in a way that recognizes advances in medical science, technology, and treatment. Doctors urged their representatives to permanently replace the outdated Medicare physician payment system, the sustainable growth rate (SGR) formula, and asked that Congress repeal the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB), a 15-member board of non-elected officials who will recommend Medicare spending reductions in order to reduce the per capita rate of growth in Medicare in years when spending exceeds a targeted growth rate.

“The sustainable growth rate formula has been flawed from the beginning and now as newer and more specialized treatments become available, the government’s payment structure becomes even more outdated. For the health of America’s senior citizens, Congress needs to act now to replace the Medicare physician payment system with a more current and fair system that adequately provides for the health and wellness of seniors,” said Brock Bakewell, MD, Alliance spokesman and member of the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery.

The Alliance of Specialty Medicine was actively engaged in policy discussions during the health reform debate and continues to work with Members of Congress to develop sound public policies that strengthen our nation’s health care delivery system. For more information on the Alliance, visit www.SpecialtyDocs.org.

The Alliance of Specialty Medicine is an organization of national medical societies, based in Washington, DC, which represents specialty physicians in the United States. This non-partisan group is dedicated to the development of sound federal health care policy that fosters patient access to the highest quality specialty care. Member organizations include: American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery; American Association of Neurological Surgeons; American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons; American Gastroenterological Association; American Society of Cataract & Refractive Surgery; American Urological Association; Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations; Congress of Neurological Surgeons; National Association of Spine Specialists; Heart Rhythm Society; and Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions. For more information, please visit www.specialtydocs.org.

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