



August 16, 2013

The Honorable Dave Camp
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
1101 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Sander Levin
Ranking Member, Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
1101 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Camp and Ranking Member Levin,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the draft policies to reform Medicare issued by the Committee on July 19, 2013. We agree that seniors deserve solutions to preserve funding for a program that provides quality healthcare to current and future beneficiaries. However, we are strongly opposed to the re-imposition of a Medicare home health copayment.

Imposing increased out-of-pocket costs on a vulnerable population of older Americans is not a solution that will stabilize this vital program. We instead urge lawmakers to advance policy solutions that will safeguard beneficiaries through program integrity reforms.

While cost-sharing policies are being proposed as a means to generate Medicare savings, lawmakers must consider the negative consequences out-of-pocket expenses will have on beneficiaries and taxpayers alike. For example, a copayment may cause beneficiaries to forego needed healthcare, resulting in more expensive treatments and hospitalizations. Analyses conducted by Avalere Health conclude that a home health copayment could increase Medicare costs by a staggering \$16.7 billion over ten years due to a shift to higher cost post-acute care settings.

Fight Fraud First! – a coalition of organizations representing older Americans, Americans with disabilities, minorities, veterans and healthcare providers – is asking the Committee to support solutions that combat waste, fraud and abuse in the healthcare system *before* instituting policies that will burden seniors.

Rather than the current and inefficient, 'pay-and-chase' approach, policy solutions are needed that stop fraud and abuse before it occurs. Our healthcare system must target the few bad actors who detract from the many compliant providers before reinstating home health copayments on older Americans.

Nearly 3.5 million Medicare beneficiaries receive home healthcare across our country. Now is the time to put forth patient-centered proposals that advance program integrity, protect vulnerable beneficiaries and save taxpayer dollars.

Sincerely,

American Autoimmune Related Diseases
Association
Caregiver Action Network
Easter Seals
Health HIV
National Association for Home Care & Hospice
National Association for Uniformed Services

National Minority Quality Forum
Partnership for Quality Home Healthcare
RetireSafe
The National Grange
Veterans Health Council
Vietnam Veterans of America
Women Against Prostate Cancer