



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF NURSING

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June 16, 2009

The Honorable Earl Blumenauer
2267 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles W. Boustany
1117 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Blumenauer and Boustany:

On behalf of the American Academy of Nursing (AAN), I would like to thank you for introducing H.R. 2773, the Medicare Transitional Care Act of 2009.

This commonsense legislation – which will create a new benefit under Medicare to coordinate care throughout acute episodes of illness, develop a streamlined plan of care to prevent future hospitalizations, and prepare the beneficiary and family caregivers to implement the care plan – has the promise to save the U.S. health care system billions of dollars as well as improve patient care and satisfaction.

The New England Journal of Medicine found that the cost to Medicare of unplanned rehospitalizations in 2004 was \$17.4 billion. While this figure is astonishing, there are evidence-based programs that reduce unnecessary rehospitalizations and the associated costs to the health care system. The findings in your bill highlight the success of the Transitional Care Model developed at the University of Pennsylvania. This hospital-to-home model uses an advanced practice nurse to work with the patient, the patient's family, and the patient's entire health care team on identifying the patient's health goals, developing a plan of care to prevent future hospitalizations, and prepares the beneficiary and family caregivers to implement the care plan. As a result, the patient experiences improved post-discharge outcomes and reduced rehospitalizations. Multiple randomized clinical trials consistently demonstrate that the Transitional Care Model produce significant health outcome improvements, reductions in health care costs among at-risk and chronically ill older adults, and increased patient satisfaction.

The AAN applauds your leadership and commitment to reducing unnecessary hospital visits. As Congress and the administration look at ways to reduce health care costs and improve care delivery, we hope they carefully study the Medicare Transitional Care Act. Please do not hesitate to call on the AAN as this critical piece of legislation moves through the legislative process. I can be reached by phone at (202) 777-1175 or by e-mail at pfordroegner@aanet.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pat Ford-Roegner".

Patricia Ford-Roegner, MSW, RN, FAAN
CEO, American Academy of Nursing