

COALITION FOR PATIENTS' RIGHTS

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COALITION FOR PATIENTS' RIGHTS (CPR) CALLS ON AMA TO CEASE DIVISIVE EFFORTS TO LIMIT PATIENTS' CHOICE OF PROVIDERS

24 health care organizations unite to ensure patients' a full range of health care provider options and the right to choose among them*

Washington, DC – In response to divisive efforts by the American Medical Association (AMA) and other physician groups to limit the ability of licensed health care professionals to provide care to millions of patients, the newly formed Coalition for Patients' Rights (CPR) today urged all health care professionals to work together to counter the AMA's actions.

The CPR was formed to ensure that the growing needs of the American health system can be met and that patients have access to quality health care providers of their choice. The coalition represents more than 3 million licensed professionals who provide a diverse array of safe, effective and affordable health care services.

In a joint statement endorsed by the 24 health care groups* that comprise the coalition, the CPR expressed concern about the negative impact on patients if their ability to seek care from advanced practice nurses, psychologists, nurse midwives, chiropractors, and many other licensed, qualified health care providers is limited. The coalition is calling on the AMA and other physician groups aligned with the AMA to cease their divisive efforts to oppose the established practice rights of CPR members. The coalition also seeks an end to legislation at the state level that would reduce provider options for patients.

The CPR is especially concerned about efforts by the AMA and other physician groups that have formed the "Scope of Practice Partnership" to study the work and qualifications of "allied health professionals" in rural and underserved areas.

"Limiting the ability of health care professionals to practice and provide appropriate care will place an enormous burden on the health care system," remarked Barbara Blakeney, MS, RN, President of the American Nurses Association, which is a member of the coalition. "As leaders of the health community, this coalition seeks to maintain the broadest range of provider choices for everyone," said Blakeney.

* As of June 6, 2006

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The coalition questions the objectives of the AMA and other physician organizations when they seek to advise consumers, regulators, policymakers and insurers on the ability of other health care professionals to offer the services they are allowed by law to provide. Health care providers are a critical source of care for patients throughout the United States, especially those who live in rural areas and medically underserved urban areas. Historically, people who live in rural areas have relied on a strong array of practitioners to meet their health care needs. Advanced practice registered nurses, social workers, and other professions that require rigorous educational preparation and ongoing instruction and certification are the backbone of not just the rural health care system, but the entire health care structure in the United States.

“Organizations representing medical doctors (MDs) and doctors of osteopathy (DOs) are not in the best position to conduct a balanced and fair assessment of an issue that directly affects their reimbursement,” said Mitchell H. Tobin, JD, Senior Director of Professional Practice Affairs for the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists, also a member of the coalition.

The coalition asserts that the AMA’s actions affect the entire health care community and all current and potential patients.

“Health care professionals other than MDs and DOs have been key to assuring access to care for millions of patients in rural and underserved areas. Given the difficulty that so many people have in getting needed care, now is the time for all health care professions to work together, not to work against each other to meet the need,” said Dr. Russ Newman, PhD, JD, Executive Director for Professional Practice of the American Psychological Association.

The Coalition for Patients’ Rights is continuing to expand and invites other health care organizations to join. For more information about the Coalition for Patients’ Rights, please visit www.patientsrightscoalition.org.

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LIST OF COALITION FOR PATIENTS' RIGHTS MEMBERS AND CONTACTS

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American Association of Nurse Anesthetists	Christopher Bettin	847-655-1143
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses	Marilyn Petterson	949-362-2020
American College of Nurse- Midwives		240-485-1800
American College of Nurse Practitioners		202-659-2190
American Nephrology Nurses Association		856-256-2320
American Nurses Association	Laura Diamond	301-628-5020
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American Psychological Association	Luana Bossolo	202-336-5898
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American Speech-Language Hearing Association		301-897-0104
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses		847-375-4710
Assn. of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses		202-261-2400
Emergency Nurses Association	Meredith Klein	312-751-4197
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists	Christine Carson Filipovich	717-234-6799
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners	Karen Kelly-Thomas	856-857-9700
National League for Nursing		212-363-5555
National Nursing Centers Consortium		215-731-7140
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties		202-289-8044
National Assn. of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health		202-543-9693
Oncology Nursing Society	Karen Hochberg	412-859-6236
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