

Attention Ohio Respiratory Therapists!

The Ohio Society for Respiratory Care in conjunction with The American Association for Respiratory Care is once again calling on OHIO respiratory therapists, their patients and their supporters to write to Congress to gain support for the Medicare Respiratory Therapy Initiative.

This Initiative which was legislation that was considered last year in Congress will soon be re-introduced again in the new Congress. In order for this Initiative to move forward, members of Congress, both House and Senate need to hear from you.

Go to the AARC's Capitol Connection site to find an email that best suits you. The website is up and running now until March 9th. Then every state including OHIO will send respiratory therapists to Capital Hill to lobby and create awareness for this important issue.

The AARC has drafted letters for respiratory therapists, RT students, physicians, pulmonary patients, friends and caretakers of pulmonary patients. All You need to do is add your zip code and your Name!

What does the Medicare Respiratory Therapy Initiative Do?

The legislative language will clearly permit respiratory therapists with both a bachelor degree and the advanced, registered respiratory therapist (RRT) professional credential to provide RT services in physician practices and will not require the physician to be in the office. Right now, RTs may provide their services in a physicians office as long as the doctor is physically in the office. This seemingly small but important change, i.e. the physician will not have to be on site, will permit a physician more flexibility to employ respiratory therapists thus giving Medicare pulmonary patients greater access to the respiratory therapist.

“New treatments such as smoking cessation, asthma and COPD disease management patient education and compliance monitoring for respiratory inhaled medications are all part of the current health care landscape,” says Cheryl West, AARC's Director of Government Affairs. “And the only health care professional who is specifically educated and competency tested in all aspects of respiratory care is the respiratory therapist.”

“It is high time that Medicare comes into the 21st century in how it covers respiratory therapy services and the professionals who provide these key services,” says West. “Medicare has remained frozen in time in this regard,

frozen as a matter of fact in the year of 1965.”

Please help the pulmonary patient gain greater access to respiratory therapists, and help Create more jobs!

Contact your member of Congress now and ask for his/her support.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper

Ohio Society for Respiratory Care President