



1129 20th Street, NW, Suite 850 • Washington, D.C. 20036-3421
Tel. 201-861-1490 • Fax 202-861-1477 • www.dmaa.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 18, 2003

CONTACT: Warren Todd / Dan Boston
(202) 861-1491 / (202) 508-3406
wtodd@DMAA.org

DMAA APPLAUDS BIPARTISAN MEDICARE AGREEMENT

**** Chronically Ill Beneficiaries to Benefit from Enhanced Care ****

WASHINGTON, DC - Today, the Disease Management Association of America (DMAA) announced its support for the reported conference agreement on H.R. 1, the Medicare Prescription Drug & Modernization Act of 2003.

"With Congress poised to pass HR. 1, the most sweeping Medicare legislation in generations, DMAA and its members are pleased to announce our strong support for this landmark measure," said Dr. Sam Nussbaum, President of DMAA and Chief Medical Officer of Anthem BlueCross."

"Of particular importance to Medicare recipients and DMAA, this agreement includes a number of advancements by helping ensure that chronically ill beneficiaries, who number approximately 15 percent of the population yet account for nearly 70 percent of annual Medicare expenditures, receive the care they need when and where they need it."

Specifically, under Sections 721 of the legislation - 'Medicare Chronic Care Improvement' - beneficiaries enrolled in the traditional fee-for-service program would, for the first time, have access to a voluntary chronic care improvement program through a national pilot process initially, and if later demonstrated to have both clinical and fiscal efficacy, as part of the overall fabric of the Medicare program. And under Section 722 of the legislation - 'Medicare Advantage Quality Improvement Programs' - conferees have ensured that plans in this program (*Medicare Advantage*) must have chronic care improvement programs, as part of their annually-reviewed quality improvement criteria.

"As our champions, House Ways & Means Committee Chairman Thomas (*R-CA*) and House Ways & Means Health Subcommittee Chairman Johnson (*R-CT*) have done yeoman's work, and we look forward to working with them to ensure that their vision of a reformed Medicare program that includes chronic care management is realized," said Dr. Nussbaum.

For the past two-and-a-half years, DMAA has been increasingly active in its advocacy initiatives, and this year, DMAA launched an even more aggressive effort, led by Christobel Selecky, DMAA President-Elect, Chair of the DMAA Government Affairs Committee, and Chief Executive Officer of LifeMasters Supported SelfCare, Inc. and Bob Stone, DMAA Immediate Past President and American Healthways Executive Vice President.

Concluding, Nussbaum added, "Bob (*Stone*), Chris (*Selecky*) and the DMAA Washington-based staff have done an outstanding job for the DM community, and the patients we serve day-in and day-out. There have been dozens of meetings with key legislators in our nation's capitol, write-in campaigns and other advocacy efforts to ensure that Medicare recipients have access to chronic care improvement programs which will enhance their quality of life and reduce preventable hospitalizations. Kudos to Bob, Chris and the DMAA Government Affairs Committee for a job well done."

For additional information, please contact Warren Todd at DMAA at (202) 861-1491 or Dan Boston at Baker, Donelson, counsel to DMAA, at (202) 508-3406. DMAA is a nonprofit, voluntary membership organization founded in March of 1999, which represents all stakeholders of the disease management community. For more information, please visit www.dmaa.org or call 202-861-1490.