



Working Together for an Affordable Future

July 3, 2013

The Honorable Ron Wyden
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rob Portman
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Wyden and Senator Portman:

I write today to express the National Coalition on Health Care's strong support for S.1228, the Medicare Better Health Rewards Program Act of 2013.

NCHC is a coalition of organizations representing health care providers, purchasers, payers and consumers, committed to promoting an affordable, high-quality health system in the United States.

Hypertension, arthritis, heart disease, cancer, and diabetes are among the most frequently occurring conditions among Medicare beneficiaries, and all of these conditions are amenable to interventions that prevent disease onset, disease progression, or the development of associated functional limitations and disabilities. In particular, wellness programs that support increased physical activity, better nutrition, smoking cessation, and other healthy behaviors have reduced inpatient admissions, lowered health care costs, and improved health-related quality of life. Yet they are not being delivered to the seniors and disabled Americans who could benefit from them.

Your legislation would change that by establishing a voluntary program available to all Medicare beneficiaries. Enrollees in this three year program would set goals with their primary care provider and receive modest cash payments if they reach those goals. The program is built around the annual wellness visits to the beneficiary's primary care provider and focuses on improvements in six priority areas vital to the management of chronic disease- tobacco usage, body mass index (BMI), diabetes indicators, blood pressure, cholesterol, vaccinations, and screenings.

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The Medicare Better Health Rewards Program Act promises to help curb Medicare program costs, not by shifting costs from one part of the system to another, but by supporting improved beneficiary health. It represents precisely the sort of bipartisan legislative effort that America needs, and NCHC is proud to offer its support. Please do not hesitate to call upon our help as you work towards its enactment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Rother". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

John Rother
President and CEO