

1101 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20004-2514
202.756.2227
202.756.7506 [fax]
www.accp.com



C. Edwin Webb, Pharm.D., M.P.H.
Associate Executive Director
Director, Government & Professional Affairs

The Honorable Max Baucus
Chairman
Committee on Finance
United State Senate
Dirksen Senate Office Building – Room 219
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Baucus:

On behalf of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP), I am writing to urge you to consider including funding for postgraduate year two (PGY-2) specialized pharmacy residency programs in your healthcare reform legislation. Funding for these residency programs was provided under Medicare GME payments prior to 2004 but was subsequently eliminated by a rule change advanced by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. As a result, such programs are declining in number at a time when the complexity and expense of medication use, especially in patients with multiple diseases who are taking multiple medications, is increasing.

ACCP is a national professional and scientific society representing more than 10,000 clinical pharmacist practitioners, researchers, and educators. Our members have been among the profession's leaders for three decades in developing and providing clinical pharmacy services, consultation, cutting-edge clinical research, and educational programs that improve the quality of medication use in the health care settings in which they practice.

Pharmacy residency training programs help prepare pharmacists to provide vital, direct patient care services as part of interprofessional healthcare delivery teams. Residency training helps develop essential professional relationships and trust between physicians and pharmacists that lead to more collaborative and effective management of patients' drug therapy. Pharmacy residency training also helps improve medication management for chronic diseases, promotes interprofessional training and team-based healthcare delivery and helps to bridge the "quality chasm" in health care by improving the safety of medication use.

In your own "Call to Action: Healthcare Reform 2009"¹ document you noted the need to promote collaboration and accountability in the Medicare program,

"...we must also provide new incentives that encourage health care providers to work together to offer patients the best possible care...Lack of collaboration can have a particularly detrimental impact on patients with chronic or multiple illnesses who can most benefit from well-coordinated care. Medicare should use payment incentives to drive more collaboration among physicians, hospitals, and other health providers."

Providing Leadership in Clinical Pharmacy Practice and Research

American College of Clinical Pharmacy • 13000 W. 87th St. Parkway • Lenexa, Kansas 66215-4530 • 913.492.3311
Michael S. Maddux, Pharm.D., FCCP, Executive Director

¹ <http://finance.senate.gov/healthreform2009/finalwhitepaper.pdf>

Senator Max Baucus
May 11, 2009
Page -2-

While your document does not specifically reference the pharmacy profession, it is clear that residency-trained pharmacists can play a vital role in helping to achieve your stated goals for healthcare reform of improved chronic care management, a reduction in the growth of healthcare spending, and enhanced collaboration and accountability among providers.

ACCP has long advocated for appropriate funding for specialized pharmacy residency training programs and believes that the improved health outcomes and reduced costs that arise from utilizing pharmacists in direct patient care roles far outweighs the cost of providing funding to ensure the continued supply of qualified pharmacists to fill these roles.

To support the importance of Medicare funding for specialized pharmacy residency programs to the evolution of the pharmacy profession, please find the following attachments enclosed:

- A 2005 letter to CMS urging the reinstatement of funding for 2nd year residency programs
- ACCP position statement that recommends by 2020, all pharmacy graduates wishing to pursue a practice career in direct patient care will seek residency training.

In summary, programs for the specialized postgraduate training of pharmacists improve quality of care, help to prevent medication-related problems, and help ensure safety and enhanced outcomes from more appropriate use of medications. ACCP urges you to address this issue more comprehensively by including funding for specialized pharmacy residencies in the healthcare reform legislation that you will introduce this year.

Please follow up with us at any time if we can provide further information on this important issue.

Sincerely,



C. Edwin Webb, Pharm.D., M.P.H.
Associate Executive Director
Director, Government and Professional Affairs

CEW/

cc: Michael S. Maddux, Pharm.D., FCCP