

Bipartisan legislation lifts geographic licensure restrictions in Medicare

WASHINGTON, Sept. 11, 2013 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The Health IT Now Coalition today commended Congressmen Devin Nunes (R-Calif.) and Frank Pallone (D-N.J.) for their commitment to the health of America's seniors and the disabled by introducing the TELEmedicine for MEDicare (TELE-MED) Act, which allows Medicare providers to treat Medicare patients electronically across state lines without the need to obtain multiple state licenses.

"This bill updates the law to account for rapid technological advances in medicine," said Congressman Devin Nunes. "By reducing bureaucratic and legal barriers between Medicare patients and their doctors, it expands medical access and choice for America's seniors and the disabled."

Telemedicine is transforming the delivery of care by bringing healthcare provider and patient together virtually. By remotely monitoring or consulting with a patient, providers are able to be involved proactively with their care, anywhere and at any time.

Joel White, Executive Director of the Health IT Now Coalition, believes the TELE-MED Act is essential for promoting the benefits of telemedicine, including lower costs and improved outcomes. "Currently, the benefits of telemedicine are limited by an antiquated system of licensure laws that hinders the practice of medicine across state lines," said White. "That means that qualified and credentialed physicians must jump through hoops and hurdles before they can treat patients remotely. Limiting the number of doctors available in any one state to treat Medicare beneficiaries - who, due to disease, transportation or mobility issues, are often not able to travel long distances to receive the care they need - not only decreases access to care, but also increases costs and harms patient outcomes."

White added, "Congress has already had success in implementing a national telemedicine framework for members of the Department of Defense and Veterans Administration. This Nunes-Pallone bill does the same thing for Medicare beneficiaries, the number of whom is

Coalition Commends Introduction of TELEmedicine for Medicare Act

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expected to rise to 81 million by 2030. The Health IT Now Coalition hopes Congress will work together to enact the TELE-MED Act into law so that seniors, the disabled, and taxpayers can all benefit from better healthcare at lower costs."

The Health IT Now Coalition promotes the rapid deployment of health information technology. Health IT will benefit patients and health care consumers while supporting health practitioners to make smart decisions about patient care while promoting efficiency. For more information, visit www.healthitnow.org

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