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Quality of Life

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
Legislative Initiatives

"People living with a serious illness experience inadequately treated symptoms, fragmented care, poor communication with their doctors and enormous strains on their family caregivers."[1]

Patient Centered Quality Care for Life Act (H.R. 1666)

Congressman Emanuel Cleaver (MO)/Congressman Spencer Bachus (AL)

Purpose: Amend the Public Health Service Act to address the symptoms and needs of patients with chronic disease.

This legislation puts in place the building blocks of a national effort to de-fragment patient care by treating pain and other symptoms of chronic disease leading to increased patient satisfaction and quality of life.

- Research: Expands research necessary to establish a strong science base for palliative care and to expand palliative care's ability to improve both quality and length of life, while reducing unnecessary healthcare costs;
- Training: Establishes a workforce training initiative to ensure sufficient numbers of health professionals at all levels to directly provide high quality palliative care for the highest risk and most complex patients;
- Focused national attention: Convenes health professionals, patients, public and private payers, and state and federal health officials to develop solutions, tools and model best practices for providing better patient centered care to individuals with chronic disease.

Palliative Care and Hospice Education and Training Act (S. 641 & H.R. 1339)

Senator Ron Wyden (OR)/Congressman Eliot Engel (NY) & Congressman Tom Reed (NY)

Purpose: To amend the Public Health Service Act to increase the number of permanent faculty in palliative care at accredited allopathic and osteopathic medical schools, nursing schools, and other programs, to promote education in palliative care and hospice, and to support the development of faculty careers in academic palliative medicine.

This legislation addresses a major barrier facing the expansion of palliative care by training medical school faculty and by creating new incentives for the training and development of interdisciplinary health professionals in palliative care.

- Creates incentives to improve the training and retraining of interdisciplinary health professionals in palliative care and to develop and disseminate curricula relating to palliative care;
- Creates up to 24 Palliative Care Education Centers at medical schools to establish fellowships that provide short-term intensive courses focused on palliative care. Fellowships are targeted to faculty to upgrade their knowledge and clinical skills for the care of individuals with serious and chronic illnesses;
- Provides grants or contracts for health care professionals to teach or practice in the field of palliative care for at least 5 years.

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[1] Morrison, R. Sean and Meier, Diane E. *America's Care of Serious Illness*. Center to Advance Palliative Care. New York, NY. 2011. p.1

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