

Arkansas PACT Meets with Congressional Delegation in Washington, DC

On March 9 and 10, ASRC PACT representative John Campbell along with 104 members of the AARC's Political Advocacy Contact Team (PACT) from 46 states and the District of Columbia traveled to Capitol Hill to educate lawmakers on the Medicare Respiratory Therapy Initiative, S. 343/HR 1077, and other legislation important to patients and Respiratory Therapists.

The Medicare Respiratory Therapy Initiative would allow BS/BA Registered Respiratory Therapists to receive reimbursement for services under Medicare Part B while working with a physician provider. Currently, a physician must be present on-site to receive reimbursement for respiratory services. Through this legislation, a physician would be able to receive 85% of the allowed reimbursement for respiratory services provided by a BS/BA RRT regardless of whether they are on-site. The BS/BA requirement has been placed in this legislation to make it comparable to the minimum requirements for other providers who presently receive this reimbursement such as nurse practitioners, PT, and OT. Though a BS/BA is required in this legislation, the BS/BA is not required to be in Respiratory Therapy.

Sam Giordano, AARC Executive Director, Cheryl West, AARC Director of Government Affairs, Miriam O'Day, AARC Director of Legislative Affairs, and Tim Meyers, AARC President met with the State PACT representatives during a briefing meeting on Monday March 9th. In this briefing, Arkansas was singled-out for its PACT efforts with Senator Lincoln and Representative Mike Ross both having introduced bills in the Senate and House. The AARC staff then accompanied many of these PACT representatives to the Capital Hill meetings on March 10th. John Campbell was able to meet with representatives for the entire Arkansas legislative delegation including Senator Lincoln and Representatives Mike Ross, Vic Snyder, and John Boozman. The Arkansas PACT representatives have been meeting in Washington with the Arkansas legislative delegation for the past 10 years and have never been turned down for a single meeting; we should be grateful to our Arkansas legislative delegation and this is not the same response seen with other states.

The Arkansas PACT needs help in getting this legislation passed. We need support letters sent to Senator Pryor and Representatives Berry, and Boozman from ASRC members, patients, and all who are interested such as consumer groups. Senate Lincoln and Representatives Ross and Snyder should receive thank you letters for already sponsoring this legislation. ARSC members can email these letters to:

Senator Lincoln - lincoln.senate.gov
www.house.gov/snyder

Rep. Snyder -

Senator Pryor - pryor.senate.gov
ross.house.gov

Rep. Ross -

Rep. Berry - www.house.gov/berry
boozman.house.gov

Rep. Boozman -