



**National Hospice & Palliative Care Organization  
Public Policy Committee  
Legislative Agenda for the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress**

Key principles to guide our federal legislative and advocacy efforts:

- Patients facing the end of life should have access to information regarding their choices for the right care at the right time, for the right reasons; and those decisions should be honored.
- Policy makers should continue to recognize the value of the Medicare hospice benefit as a patient-centered, comprehensive, interdisciplinary care model.
- Access to the Medicare Hospice Benefit must be protected and expanded.
- Program integrity measures to ensure continued accountability and transparency are vital to the modernization and growth of the hospice benefit.
- Hospice is the original and appropriate model of care for the expansion of palliative care.

Ongoing priorities for NHPCO and the Hospice Action Network:

- **Access.** Expand patient and family access to hospice and palliative care across all settings. This includes the exploration/creation of a model of care which allows patients and families to benefit from the coordination and supportive services offered by the Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) earlier in the patient's disease trajectory, and efforts supporting earlier and routine opportunities for advance care planning.
- **Workforce.** Ensure quality and access throughout the hospice community by: 1) Breaking down barriers health care professionals experience working in hospice through aligning their responsibilities with those they have in other health care sectors; 2) Supporting patient preferences for attending physicians; and 3) Working toward greater hospice and palliative care training across education curriculums.
- **Reimbursement.** Protect Medicare reimbursement levels for hospice. Emphasize targeted, data- and policy-driven reforms that take into account the increasing regulatory and administrative burden for hospices while preserving patient access to hospice services.
- **Program Integrity.** Support an aggressive program integrity approach focused on ensuring the quality of providers by targeting any inappropriate behaviors by providers, and promoting transparency, accountability, and patient choice.

Additional legislative efforts supported by NHPCO and the Hospice Action Network:

- Protecting Medicare Advantage beneficiaries' current access to the Medicare certified hospice of their choice.
- Advocating for sound hospice payment reform that is well tested and will not adversely impact access to the Medicare hospice benefit.
- Addressing the unique needs of hospice providers that serve rural communities.
- Testing the creation of new end of life standards, outcome measures and quality benchmarks for the identification and coordination of hospice care in Medicare Advantage plans. In addition, explore new/future forms of payment such as ACOs, bundled and/or episodic payment methods.