

California Chronic Care Coalition

We're about People, We're about Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTING CHRONIC CONDITIONS UNITE IN SUPPORT OF GOVERNOR SCHWARZENEGGER'S HEALTH CARE REFORM EFFORTS

SACRAMENTO, CA: Leading patient advocacy and provider organizations today launched the California Chronic Care Coalition (CCCC) formally supporting the Governor's key principles of health care reform, while working with all lawmakers to continue efforts that push for health care reform this year.

"Our system has been broken for too long and must be reformed," said Liz Helms, founder of the coalition and President/CEO of the TMJ and Orofacial Pain Society of America (TOPS). "The participating organizations of the CCCC are working to ensure that any health care reform proposal being considered meets the needs of individuals with chronic conditions."

The Coalition's current focus is on the Governor's five key principles of reform:

- Comprehensive prevention policies to fight chronic conditions
- Every Californian is guaranteed they can buy health insurance
- Provides coverage for all and requires every California to have insurance that is affordable.
- Increases Medi-Cal reimbursements to doctors and hospitals
- Promotes contribution from all sectors

Chronic care and patient advocacy groups have been a part of the Governor's health care reform plan since last year. The CCCC realized how valuable and essential its views were to the success of health reform and decided to form a coalition to push for key items in the debate.

"It is key for policy makers to recognize that spending a little more up front on comprehensive prevention and management of chronic conditions will result in long term savings to our entire healthcare system," says Karen Vicari, Executive Director of the Alliance for Better Medicine. "Successful prevention strategies rely on individualized healthcare which takes into consideration factors such as age, race and co-occurring disorders, not cost alone."

*Chronic conditions represent the highest cost of health care dollars with the greatest potential of preventability. For example, with a team approach to proper Diabetes management significant results occurred. Annual average insurance claims decreased by \$2,704 per patient in the first follow-up year and by \$6,502 per patient in the fifth follow-up year. Payers realized significant reductions in overall, annual direct medical costs – with savings ranging from \$1,622 to \$3,356

per patient. Employees reported a greater quality of life and greater success in managing their diabetes and absenteeism was cut by more than half – from 12.6 days to 6.2 days a year.

Asheville Project, North Carolina

Together the coalition represents over 16 million Californians with chronic conditions including provider organizations and policy groups. The California Chronic Care Coalition's mission is to improve the health care system where all Californians can access comprehensive, affordable, quality health care. We do this by educating and collaborating with all branches of government and key stakeholders to re-design a system of care that includes access to quality health care, including wellness and prevention coverage.

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