



PARTNERSHIP TO FIGHT CHRONIC DISEASE

Important Considerations Drive Health Care Coverage Decisions this Open Enrollment Period

Affordability, access and ACA uncertainty weigh heavily on chronically ill populations

Washington, D.C. (November 30, 2016) In the midst of open enrollment and on the heels of election season, it is more important than ever for Americans considering their health care coverage to have a comprehensive grasp on the health care needs for themselves and their families and a clear understanding of the coverage plans available to them. But according to a [recent survey](#) conducted by the [Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease \(PFCD\)](#) Americans are increasingly unsettled about the direction health care coverage is going. Access, affordability, and transparency are major concerns, and many among the most vulnerable populations are making tough choices against recommended treatment due to high deductibles, coverage limitations or denials of care. With chronic disease on the rise, and managing multiple chronic conditions a particular challenge throughout the U.S., there is a pressing need for lawmakers to address access and affordability concerns regarding insurance premiums, co-pays, deductibles, and other out-of-pocket costs.

To explore these issues and uncover opportunities for change, the [Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease \(PFCD\)](#) today hosted a Capitol Hill briefing – [Open Enrollment 2017: Understand Essential Health Benefits, Ensuring Proper Coverage, and Advancing Access to Care for Vulnerable Populations](#). The briefing highlighted recent reports from both EasterSeals and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) that underscore the challenges facing Americans with multiple chronic conditions and mental health issues as they endeavor to secure adequate health care coverage in order to maximize their overall health and wellness.

“It is at this time each year that many Americans face the increasingly daunting task of securing their health care coverage for the year ahead. With chronic conditions on the rise, and a new administration preparing to take office, the time is ripe to remind our leaders about the value and impact of developing programs and policies that can guide our nation’s most vulnerable populations to the health care that they need and deserve,” said Ken Thorpe, PFCD Chairman. “By furthering awareness and requests for information around the evolving spectrum of health care offerings, we can encourage and support the many stake holders throughout the care system to prioritize better management, and perhaps even prevention, in pursuit of improved overall health and wellness, most especially for patients juggling many costly, chronic conditions at once.”

Today’s panelists elevated specific obstacles such as the ability to access specialty providers in network and the gaps presented by the lack of available information for patients as they navigate the ins and outs of health care plans. Featured speakers included:

- Ken Thorpe, PhD, Chairman, Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease
- Andrew Sperling, Director of Legislative Advocacy, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
- Mary Andrus, Assistant Vice President, Government Relations, EasterSeals

For more information on today’s event, including the EasterSeals and NAMI research reports, please visit www.fightchronicdisease.org.

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The Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease (PFCD) is an international coalition of hundreds of patient, provider, community, business and labor groups, and health policy experts, committed to raising awareness of the number one cause of death, disability and rising health care costs: chronic disease.

Learn more by visiting www.FightChronicDisease.org.

MEDIA INQUIRIES:

Jennifer Burke

Jennifer.burke@fightchronicdisease.org

301.801.9847