

A Resolution to Promote Wellness

CONGRESSIONAL RESOLUTION EMPHASIZES THE ROLE WELLNESS PROGRAMS SHOULD PLAY IN FUTURE HEALTH CARE POLICY.

Editorial Staff

Rep. James Langevin (D-RI) has introduced a resolution that calls on Congress to include wellness programs in any re-engineering of the U.S. health care system. Introduced on July 31 in the House of Representatives, with the Senate concurring, the resolution notes a growing body of evidence suggesting wellness programs, particularly those which advocate lifestyle changes, can "diminish the incidence and severity of chronic disease, provide a substantial return on investment, and reduce reliance on the conventional medical care system." The resolution recommends Congress ensure that any health care reform achieves four specific goals with respect to promoting wellness:

- (1) incorporates sustainable wellness programs that address the underlying causal factors associated with chronic disease;
- (2) ensures that the public has access to strategies for improving individual health through lifestyle change, including strategies relating to diet, exercise, smoking cessation, and stress reduction;
- (3) provides patient-centered care that addresses personal health needs, and that uses a multidimensional approach to encourage patients to improve their own wellness through lifestyle changes and the use of scientifically-based therapies that facilitate the inherent ability of the human body to maintain and restore optimal health; and
- (4) utilizes clearly defined standards to determine when the implementation of wellness and health promotion activities will be useful for each patient based on the diet, exercise habits, individual health history, and family health history of the patient.

The resolution was introduced at the urging of the American Association of Naturopathic Physicians. In a statement, AANP Executive Director Karen Howard stressed the need to transition health care from a disease-management model to one built on wellness - a sentiment undoubtedly shared by doctors of chiropractic and other natural health practitioners: "The importance of the message contained in this Resolution cannot be underestimated. Not one health care reform conversation to date has taken on the challenge of transforming our disease management system to one built on the foundation of being well. In other words, all current health care reform proposals on the table are destined to further bankrupt society and the health of future generations. Congressman Langevin's resolution is the start of a new and essential conversation."

As of press time, H. Con. Res. 406 has been referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. To learn more, visit: www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=hc110-406.

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