



AMERICAN COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS
INTERNAL MEDICINE | *Doctors for Adults*®

June 6, 2011

The Honorable Earl Blumenauer
U.S. House of Representatives
2267 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Blumenauer:

On behalf of the American College of Physicians (ACP), an organization representing 130,000 internal medicine physicians and medical students, I appreciate your continued commitment to the issue of advanced care planning and support the intent of your legislation, the *Personalize Your Care Act of 2011*. This legislation would provide coverage under Medicare for voluntary consultations between doctors and patients to discuss advance care plans. It would also provide states and communities with grants to create or expand programs that assist with advance care planning.

ACP recognizes that physicians should routinely raise the issue of advanced care planning with competent adult patients during outpatient visits and encourage them to discuss their values and preferences with their surrogates and family members. Physicians and patients should work prospectively in developing a plan that recognizes the patient's views and treatment preferences for their last months and years of life. ACP supports greater recognition and adequate Medicare reimbursement for the extended and complex counseling required for physicians to develop end of life care plans with their patients. This legislation will implement these goals supported by ACP to improve end of life patient care.

Although ACP supports the goals of this legislation, we have concerns regarding section four of the bill that would require that certified electronic health records display current advance directives and physician orders for life sustaining treatment. Physicians would have to meet this requirement in order to achieve new Stage 2 meaningful use and certification standards of electronic health records. ACP is concerned that this provision would bypass a process, mandated by the HITECH Act, in which CMS conducts extensive consultations with stakeholders to determine the certification standards for electronic health records. Congress should refrain from any actions that result in circumventing this process. We welcome the opportunity to work with you to improve this section of the legislation.

We appreciate your sustained commitment for improving the quality of care for seriously ill individuals. Pending your willingness to address our concerns regarding certification of electronic health records, we would be pleased to fully endorse your legislation and look forward to working with you to advance it through Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Virginia Hood". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Virginia Hood, MBBS, MPH, FACP
President