



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

May 6, 2009

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 126,000 internal medicine physicians and medical students, I am pleased to express the College's support for *H.R. 1898, the Life Sustaining Treatment Preferences Act of 2009*. This legislation would provide coverage under Medicare for consultations between doctors and patients to develop end of life care plans. It would also provide states and communities with grants to create or expand programs that assist with advanced care planning.

ACP recognizes that physicians should routinely raise the issue of end of life 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 develop a plan that recognizes the patients views and treatment preferences for their last months and years of life. ACP supports greater recognition and adequate Medicare reimbursement for extended and complex counseling required for physicians to develop end of life care plans for their patients. H.R. 1898, will implement these goals supported by ACP to improve end of life patient care.

This legislation is also consistent with the principles of the Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH), also supported by ACP. The PCMH is a team-based model of care led by a personal physician who provides continuous and coordinated care throughout a patient's lifetime to maximize health outcomes. This includes the provision of preventive services, treatment of acute and chronic illness, and assistance with **end of life care issues**. This model is a valuable asset in advanced care planning since the physician would have the opportunity to develop personal relationships with their patients and families and implement an end of life care plan.

We look forward to working with you to pass this legislation as the Congress considers health reform this year. Please do not hesitate to contact Brian Buckley in our ACP office at 202-261-4543 if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph W. Stubbs".

Joseph W. Stubbs, MD, FACP
President