

September 12, 2018

The Honorable Adrian Smith
320 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Joseph Crowley
1035 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Diane Black
1131 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ben Ray Lujan
2231 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Morgan Griffith
2202 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Smith, Black, Griffith, Crowley, and Lujan:

The undersigned organizations are writing to express our support for the *Reducing Unnecessary Senior Hospitalization (RUSH) Act of 2018* (H.R. 6502). We thank you for your leadership in bringing much-needed innovation to the Medicare program.

The Protecting Access to Medicare Act of 2014 (PAMA) required CMS to implement the Skilled Nursing Facility Value-Based Purchasing Program (SNF VBP) to link Medicare payments to each SNF's rehospitalization rate. Additional tools and resources would be helpful as this program continues. In particular, information technology resources and policies that would support further improvement is a barrier for SNFs. SNF providers were not included in the *Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act* and are struggling with razor thin margins. The combination of these elements makes development of telehealth functions and interoperability extremely challenging.

By allowing Medicare to selectively enter into value-based arrangements with innovative medical groups to provide acute care at SNFs instead of transferring to the hospital, the *RUSH Act* would provide new and effective care delivery options. The on-site first responder, connected via telehealth to an emergency physician and equipped with mobile diagnostics, would be able to treat the acute care needs of SNF patients instead of transferring to the hospital. This model has been proven to reduce hospital transfers by approximately 50 percent and increase quality in nursing homes.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue. We look forward to working with you to ensure the RUSH Act becomes law.

Sincerely,

Coalition to Transform Advanced Care
Health IT Now
Nassau Queens PPS

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine
The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research
University of Rochester Medical Center