

June 10, 2015

The Honorable Johnny Isakson
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mark Warner
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Isakson and Senator Warner,

The undersigned organizations would like to express our strong support for the *Care Planning Act*. We appreciate your leadership in advancing this important bipartisan legislation.

As this legislation recognizes, the care that Americans receive near the end of life often does not reflect their values, goals and preferences. The *Care Planning Act* includes many provisions that will help improve documentation of patients' wishes for their care near the end of life and move toward greater patient-centered care.

This legislation would establish Medicare coverage for voluntary advance care planning, thereby increasing access to this important service. Research shows that advance care planning conversations significantly improve outcomes for patients, including: care that is consistent with their wishes, fewer hospitalizations, more use of hospice, and an increased likelihood of dying in their preferred location.

Another critical provision in the *Care Planning Act* prioritizes and funds the development of quality measures for care near the end of life. A key barrier to improving care near the end of life has been the lack of tools to measure the concordance between the individual's stated goals, values, and preferences with documented care plans, the treatment that is delivered, and the outcome of treatment. Removing this barrier is the first step in encouraging health systems and insurers to improve the care they provide.

We strongly support the Act's provision which encourages providers to test new models of advanced illness care coordination services. Ensuring that people near the end of life are included in federal demonstrations of innovative payment and service delivery models will accelerate improvements in end-of-life care.

We thank you for your efforts to improve end-of-life care for Americans. Please contact Judith Peres at 202-540-6994 or jperes@pewtrusts.org with any questions or for more information.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Pain Management
American Geriatrics Society
AMDA – The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine
Center for Medicare Advocacy
Center for Practical Bioethics
Colon Cancer Alliance
National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization
The Pew Charitable Trusts
Visiting Nurses Association of American