



For Immediate Release

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Eleven Major Patient Groups Outline Joint Position on Health Care Reform

Washington, D.C., March 6, 2017 – *A coalition of eleven nonpartisan patient groups today laid out a joint set of goals they want Congress to focus on as it considers changes to the Affordable Care Act. The coalition includes these organizations: American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, American Diabetes Association, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, JDRF, March of Dimes, Muscular Dystrophy Association, National Multiple Sclerosis Society, National Organization for Rare Disorders, and WomenHeart, the National Coalition for Women and Heart Disease. The groups issued the following statement:*

“As Congress begins debate on how to improve the nation’s health care system, our organizations will evaluate any proposed changes based on a set of [Consensus Health Care Reform Principles](#) we believe necessary to provide affordable, accessible and adequate coverage for all Americans. To protect the

millions of patients we represent, we are united behind the following critical components and will assess any proposals to ensure they are addressed.

First, we believe that any new plan cannot jeopardize the health care coverage Americans currently have through employers, the marketplace, Medicaid or Medicare. They should be able to keep that coverage and ideally, any reform plan would go further to extend coverage to the uninsured or underinsured, lower costs and improve quality for everyone.

Second, there are three key elements – affordability, accessibility and adequate coverage – that must be included in any meaningful proposals to alter the current system.

Patients need affordable coverage – which includes reasonable premiums, cost sharing and out-of-pocket limits. Adequate financial assistance should be available to lower-income Americans and working families. Patients with preexisting conditions should not face higher premiums.

Patients also need access to coverage that maintains the ban on pre-existing condition exclusions, lifetime and annual caps and other patient protections that have greatly appreciated bipartisan support and are viewed as fundamental in health insurance coverage.

Finally, health insurance must be more than a promise of coverage. Plans must provide needed health benefits with an adequate network of providers. Our organizations also strongly believe that any reform proposals include a focus on prevention which results in longer and healthier lives for our patients, while reducing health care spending.

We look forward to working with Congress, the administration and the broader health care community to achieve these shared goals that are of vital importance to the health of all Americans.”

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