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Home Care Alliance to Hold Briefing in Washington DC *Alliance in Capitol to Advocate for Home Health Care*

Boston, MA – The Home Care Alliance of Massachusetts will be in Washington DC from March 22-25 to join their organization counterparts from across the nation in an effort to fight against potentially devastating cuts to the home health industry.

Based on the recommendations of the Medicare Payment Advisory Council (MedPAC) the Obama Administration included damaging cuts to home health as part of the proposed FY 2010 budget. The previous administration under George W. Bush attempted similar action based on MedPAC's recommendations, but Congress prevented the decrease from occurring.

HCA of MA Executive Director Patricia Kelleher and several agency members will be in meetings with lawmakers and staff and will take part in the National Association for Home Care & Hospice Conference. In addition, the Alliance will host a briefing, in conjunction with the Connecticut Association for Home Care & Hospice, in hopes that Congress will repeat that action taken during the previous administration.

“We are asking Congress to once again stand up for home health care and oppose these unsustainable reductions,” said Kelleher. “One in ten Massachusetts elders received home care services through Medicare in 2008. Losing these services would put elders at risk and also incur much higher costs for Medicaid, Medicare and the taxpayers.”

Over five years these harmful cuts would take more than \$13 billion from the Medicare home health program. The Administration's budget also calls for the bundling of hospital and post acute care payments beginning in 2013. If the president's proposal is allowed to pass, Massachusetts would lose:

- \$16.7 million in Medicaid reimbursement for fiscal year 2010
- \$399.8 million from fiscal years 2010 to 2014 (five years)
- \$1.12 billion from fiscal years 2010 to 2019 (ten years)

The Home Care Alliance of Massachusetts and several of its members traveling to Washington DC are urging that lawmakers reject the President's proposals for a five-year freeze of Medicare home health payments and bundling of acute and post-acute payments.

About the Home Care Alliance:

With a mission to unite people and organizations to advance community health through care and services in the home, the Home Care Alliance of Massachusetts is a non-profit trade association and advocacy group providing representation, education, communication, advocacy and – ultimately – a voice for the state's home health industry. Founded in 1969, the Alliance is celebrating its 40th year in existence.

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