

PRESS STATEMENT

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The Right Man at the Right Time

The recess appointment of Donald Berwick, M.D., M.P.P., to the position of Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is a step toward ensuring sustainable health care that contains costs and promotes significant delivery system reform. CMS has been without leadership for almost four years and at this critical juncture cannot afford to operate without Dr. Berwick's visionary leadership. The post is critical to the success of health system reform. Under ACA, Medicare will be a testing ground for many delivery system innovations designed to reward high-quality care and penalize providers of poor care. Additionally, ACA will expand Medicaid to provide health coverage to 16 million or more people with low incomes.

Dr. Donald Berwick, President of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement and one of the nation's most respected voices on improving the health care delivery system, is uniquely qualified for the CMS Administrator's role. Dr. Berwick's leadership and experience in the public, private, and non-profit sectors will prove invaluable as the nation transforms its health care delivery system and refocuses on patient-centered medical care. His work has earned the respect of physicians, colleagues and patients from across the country including, the American Medical Association, the American Hospital Association and previous CMS administrators from both political parties. His efforts have resulted in reductions to hospital infection rates and the implementation of better asthma care through exploring ways to improve procedures, not by raising fees.

Ralph G. Neas, NCHC President and CEO, and Henry Simmons, M.D., M.P.H., F.A.C.P., Founder and President Emeritus, applaud this appointment and look forward to his pioneering leadership that is needed to help make health care reform work for patients and families.

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The NCHC Action Fund is a 501(c)(4) not for profit organization devoted to public education, and advocacy to secure stable affordable health care for America. The National Coalition on Health Care, the oldest and most diverse alliance of groups committed to securing and sustaining health care system reform, is a 501(c)(3) organization. This statement reflects a consensus of the members of the National Coalition Health Care (NCHC) but some Coalition members do not, or cannot, take positions either on specific legislation, strategies or on any policies outside their respective mission areas. Not every member of NCHC has a position on or supports every position of the NCHC Action Fund. However, all that can endorse broad policy positions do support comprehensive health system reform. Both organizations are located at 1120 G Street, NW, Suite 810, Washington, DC 20005. Phone: (202) 638-7151.