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THOMPSON, COURTNEY INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE REHAB THERAPY FOR MEDICARE PATIENTS

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, Representatives Glenn "GT" Thompson (PA-15) and Joe Courtney (CT-02) introduced the bipartisan *Access to Inpatient Rehabilitation Therapy Act*. This legislation expands access to skilled rehabilitation therapies for Medicare patients and provides American seniors with patient-centered, well rounded treatment options.

"As a former Rehabilitation Services Manager and Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist, I was honored to work with patients facing life-changing disease and disability for nearly three decades. The effectiveness of care involves the proper mix, frequency and intensity of medically necessary physician prescribed therapy," Rep. Thompson said. "I am pleased to reintroduce bipartisan legislation that will ensure Medicare empowers physicians to fully exercise their medical judgment and therapy professionals to deliver the best possible care for patients recovering from accidents or illness."

"This bill would make a small but important change to Medicare to ensure that patients recovering from an injury or disabling event can receive the types of rehab that their care team recommends. The current "intensity of therapy" requirement does not support the range of therapies – such as respiratory therapy or recreational therapy – that patients may need to recover from an injury of serious medical event. It's crucial that these patients have access to the treatment that their care team recommends, and I'm glad to work with Rep. GT Thompson to introduce this legislation to ensure Medicare better supports patient recovery," Rep. Courtney said.

"Providing access to a broad mix of skilled, intensive rehabilitation therapies is a hallmark of the specialized care provided in inpatient rehabilitation hospitals. Our rehabilitation physicians, therapists, and care teams tirelessly work to ensure that each patient gets the right care for their individual needs at the right time. This legislation will help us provide that full spectrum of care for the patients we serve, and we are proud to support Congressman Thompson and Congressman Courtney in their much-needed efforts." – Anthony Cuzzola, Board Chair of the American Medical Rehabilitation Providers Association (AMRPA)

"When led by a physical medicine and rehabilitation physician, inpatient rehabilitation care offers patients an essential and vital care plan to meet their rehabilitation needs. Thank you to Representatives Thompson and Courtney for reintroducing the *Access to Inpatient Rehabilitation Therapy Act* to ensure that all inpatient rehabilitation facility patients can continue to benefit from the breadth of services that are critically important for patient care." –Steven Flanagan, MD, FAAPMR, President of the American Academy of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

"The American Therapeutic Recreation Association (ATRA) is pleased to support this vital legislation being introduced today by Representatives Thompson and Courtney. Providing physicians with the ability to prescribe treatments such as recreational therapy when it is medically necessary is an important step forward in enhanced patient care. The inclusion of active treatment such as recreational therapy will only help patients and families get the best care they need and aid them in their recovery. ATRA is committed to supporting this legislation and will continue to work with all members of Congress to ensure access to quality healthcare." – Brent Wolfe, Executive Director of American Therapeutic Recreation Association (ATRA)

"Inpatient rehabilitation facilities provide care that is critically important for people with complex medical and therapeutic needs. No other setting offers the multi-disciplinary care they provide: Physicians, nurses, and therapists working together in dedicated teams. Fortunately, this bill recognizes the importance of this unique care and supports coverage for Medicare beneficiaries who desperately need it." – Judy Stein, Executive Director of Center for Medicare Advocacy

"No two brain injuries are alike, and allowing physicians to determine the appropriate mix of skilled services within inpatient rehabilitation facilities is critical to providing the individualized and comprehensive treatment necessary for a person with as complex a condition as brain injury. The Brain Injury Association of America supports this bill as it would ensure that patients have access to these best practices of rehabilitation therapy." – Rick Willis, President and CEO of the Brain Injury Association of America

Additional Supporting Organizations:

Allies for Independence, ALS Association, American Association on Health and Disability, American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine, American Music Therapy Association, American Spinal Injury Association, Amputee Coalition, Association of Academic Physiatrists, Association of Rehabilitation Nurses, Association of University Centers on Disabilities, Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation,

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Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), Epilepsy Foundation Falling Forward Foundation, Lakeshore Foundation, National Association for the Advancement of Orthotics and Prosthetics, National Association of Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies, National Association of State Head Injury Administrators, National Association of Social Workers (NASW), National Disability Rights Network (NDRN), RESNA, Spina Bifida Association, United Cerebral Palsy, United Spinal Association

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