NHIA Guide for Legislator Visit
to Your Home Infusion Pharmacy

Offer the invitation

- Call the member of Congress's Washington, DC office and ask to speak to the scheduler. To access contact information for your legislators, click http://cqrcengage.com/nhianet/lookup.

- Different offices have different processes, but start with the DC office, and they will inform you if local appointments are handled by their main district office. Processes could be different during a recess period.

- After you make the call, you may be requested to follow up with a formal letter of invitation. Ascertain who you should send it to and the route (e.g.,email address, FAX #). For your convenience, click http://www.nhia.org/Advocacy-Test/SiteVisitRequestGuide.cfm to obtain a template for a letter that you can edit and send.

- Be sure to include in the letter the location and size of your infusion pharmacy and identify the specific issue you would like to discuss: providing Medicare beneficiaries with access to home infusion therapies through meaningful coverage in Medicare.

- Once you have confirmation for the visit to your pharmacy, find out how much time you will have for the visit, and whether the official's staff will be accompanying. Legislators have busy and ever-changing schedules, so you may have to be flexible about the time and date of the visit.

- Even if the visit will only be with a key Legislative Aide (LA), welcome this because developing a positive relationship can help tremendously in your future communications with the legislator. Try to schedule a LA with title such as Chief of Staff, Health LA, Medicare/Medicaid LA, Seniors Issues LA, etc.

Prepare for the visit

- Just seeing your practice will ensure that the legislator never looks at home infusion issues the same way again. In advance, you may send background materials that your company has in stock for patients or referral sources that explain home infusion services.

- Prepare your staff to use formal salutations ("Representative X" or "Congressman/woman X", "Senator Y") with the legislator.

- Consider inviting the local press if coordinated with the legislator's office so that the official knows and welcomes the opportunity for publicity.

- Visit NHIA's Site Visit Action Center (at http://www.nhia.org/Advocacy-Test/InviteYourMembersofCongressToYourFacility.cfm) to obtain materials to provide during the visit.

Convey your key messages

- Remember to make your explanations personal to your pharmacy and demonstrate why the lack of the home site of care for infusion services and supplies has affected your ability to deliver home infusion therapies to many Medicare beneficiaries. The burdens imposed upon seniors and disabled individuals by Medicare's gaps for infusion coverage are the key reason legislation is needed.

- Personalized stories about specific Medicare patient situations can be very effective to make your points. (Be mindful of privacy requirements.)

- Introduce the members of your staff and explain what they do. If any staff member has specialized training, highlight that with the legislator and explain how that training is critical to delivering quality care to your patients.

- Talk about the many quality assurance procedures you have in place and how they are part of ensuring patient safety and as applicable maintaining your JCAHO, ACHC or CHAP accreditation.

- Show the legislator the specialized equipment, clean room or other facilities in your pharmacy and explain how that equipment is used and how it contributes to the delivery of home infusion to your patients.

- For maximum educational impact, consider inviting your legislator or a key LA on a home visit. As this may be difficult to schedule, also consider inviting patients or their families to the pharmacy visit to tell their stories to the legislator.

- Answer questions. If you don't know an answer, offer to follow up (it will give you another reason to contact the legislator).

<div align="center">

NHIA Contact:
Kendall Van Pool, Vice President Legislative Affairs,
703-838-2664
Kendall.vanpool@nhia.org

</div>