

PACT UPDATE – February 16, 2006:

Norm and I traveled to Washington DC last week and met with staff from both Oregon Senator's offices and all 5 House of Representative's offices, in addition to the AARC preparatory meetings. We lobbied for RT reimbursement in the home (HR964) and consistent reimbursement for pulmonary and cardiac rehabilitation (S1440), as well as the COPD Caucus. We asked for co-sponsorship of both bills, a cost analysis of HR964, introduction of a companion bill for S1440 on the House side, and offered to be resources for the Congressional offices on respiratory issues.

At the recommendation of the AARC speakers, we did not bring up the Deficit Reduction Act and the associated issues around oxygen reimbursement in the home. We were asked once, and responded with the pts viewpoint of understanding/being responsible for repairs after taking ownership, supply issues, and said the AARC would be involved in the rules development. We were also asked for some specific data about lung disease in Oregon.

A big thanks to Norm & the OSRC for supporting our efforts!

Attached is one of the follow-up letters I sent this week. I have already received one phone call and an email in response. Rep DeFazio's office said they called Rep Renzie's office (H964 sponsor) and identified some concerns. He also asked for a favor, so I'll call him tomorrow.

Thanks!... Joe Dwan

Dear _____,

In following up to our visit on Feb 7th, were you able to get input from Representative Wu regarding his stance on HR 964? Is he willing to co-sponsor this bill with Representative Renzi? Would he support this when it comes to the floor?

HR 964 is requesting changes in Medicare to allow substituting a respiratory therapist in lieu of a nurse or PT, for home visits. As these visits are capped, there is no additional cost.

Would he also support S1440, clarifying reimbursement for Pulmonary and Cardiac Rehabilitation, should it be introduced in the House?

On behalf of our lung patients, the Oregon Society for Respiratory Care, Norm Kerr and myself, Thank You!

Joe Dwan, MS, RRT
503 571 4770

Information regarding lung disease in Oregon, from www.lungoregon.org:

Statistics Show Importance of ALAO's Mission

The American Lung Association of Oregon's mission is to prevent and cure lung disease and to promote lung health. Whenever new data becomes available, we redouble our efforts to accomplishing that mission. Here's the latest data available on Oregonians living with lung disease.

Estimate of Oregonians with Lung Disease:

- Lung Cancer **2,104**
- Emphysema **37,227**
- Chronic Bronchitis **111,813**
- Adult Asthma **210,501**
- Pediatric Asthma Attacks **43,609**

The data are based upon the 1999 National Health Interview Survey, the 2000 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey and the 1999 Surveillance, Epidemiology and End Results (SEER) program. The numbers reflected are estimated prevalence and incidence of lung disease within our Lung Association area, and not the actual number. For a complete breakdown of lung disease incidence by county, call 1-800-LUNG-USA.

For more information contact healthinfo@lungoregon.org or call 503-924-4094 ext. 10.

February 3, 2006

Two things: Senate Bill 1440, the cardio-pulmonary rehab bill to improve Medicare reimbursement, now has a companion bill in the House, HR4824!!! So our lobbying efforts in Feb have paid off! We'll be watching its progress.

Locally, on the state level, the AARC provided this information:

Oregon requires insurers to pay for durable medical equipment at 85% of the manufacturer's suggested retail (MSRP) price. Defines "prosthetic," "orthosis" and "medical supplies" for clarification purposes., AGENCY CONTACT: Fred Bruyns, 350 Winter St NE, Salem OR 97301- 3879, 503-947-7717.