

Health Care Reform Principles

Patients need affordable health care insurance. PPTA believes patients deserve access to appropriate public and private health insurance coverage regardless of health or disability, employment status, age, or medical predisposition. Specifically, PPTA believes private health care insurers should not discriminate against patients by placing artificially low lifetime capitations on insurance. Moreover, government backed insurance programs should encourage the expansion of supplemental insurance to those enrolled in Medicare immediately upon qualifying for social security disability insurance benefits, regardless of age.

Ensure unfettered access to drugs and biologics. PPTA supports patient access to all medically appropriate, lifesaving plasma protein therapies, which because of important clinical and manufacturing differences, an individual patient may tolerate or react to one therapy better than another in the same class. Because such therapies are not therapeutically equivalent, pharmaceutically equivalent, or bioequivalent, they are not interchangeable. As such, PPTA urges Congress to proceed cautiously when implementing an abbreviated Food and Drug Administration approval pathway for follow-on biologics. Additionally, PPTA opposes any limitation of access to plasma protein therapies based on comparative effectiveness models by government and private health insurance plans for patients who have chronic, life-threatening diseases.

Reimbursement for providers must adequately reflect the high value that lifesaving therapies give patients. PPTA supports provider reimbursement increases that recognize the true costs of the acquisition, delivery and administration of unique and effective drugs and biologics such as plasma protein therapies. Innovative therapies provide an increased quality of life for patients with rare, chronic life-threatening diseases and reimbursement proposals that hinder their access can lead to delays in obtaining the proper medical care, resulting in higher healthcare costs.

Encourage implementation of health information technology (Health IT). PPTA supports the transition from largely paper-based system to an electronically integrated network for optimal patient care. The advancement of Health IT is critical in efforts in lowering costs and enabling insurers and physicians to provide better quality health care to patients with greater efficiency. PPTA supports state, federal and private sector initiatives in promoting the creation of a universally interoperable health information technology platform.

Medical liability reform is needed to curb lawsuit abuse. Frivolous lawsuits and excessive jury awards are driving many health care providers out of communities and forcing doctors to practice defensive medication in fear of losing or being unable to obtain liability insurance. PPTA supports a common-sense approach to medical liability reform that will help alleviate the high costs that burdensome and unnecessary lawsuits have on the entire health care system.

NOTE: Health Care Reform Principles Approved by PPTA North American Board in February 2009