



CHILDREN'S HOSPICE INTERNATIONAL

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BIPARTISAN LEADERS OF THE COLORADO CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION LAUD CHI PACC AS AN IMPORTANT PART OF MEDICAID REFORM

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Bipartisan members of the Colorado Congressional delegation today urged the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to "promptly review" a new Medicaid waiver that, once approved, is expected to provide greatly improved health care for 4,000 children in Colorado.

The state of Colorado will soon submit its anticipated federal waiver to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), which will be the first step toward actual implementation of the landmark CHI "Program for All-Inclusive Care for Children and Their Families," known as CHI PACC.

CHI PACC was developed by Children's Hospice International (CHI) with technical assistance from CMS. Colorado is the second state to apply for a CMS waiver, after Florida. (Florida's CHI PACC waiver was approved by HHS/CMS in June 2005.)

All nine members of the Colorado delegation cosigned the Dec. 21, 2005 letter to HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt, which lauded Colorado's landmark program, called the "The Butterfly Program." These included U.S. Senators Wayne Allard (R-Colo.) and Ken Salazar (D-Colo.), and U.S. Representatives Joel Hefley (R-Colo.), Bob Beauprez (R-Colo.), Diana DeGette (D-Colo.), Marilyn Musgrave (R-Colo.), John Salazar (D-Colo.), Tom Tancredo (R-Colo.) and Mark Udall (R-Colo.).

The Butterfly Program, which has been under development at The Children's Hospital in Denver since 2002, provides more compassionate care for children from the time of diagnosis, with hope for cure, through bereavement, if necessary. It will serve patients from seven states -- Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, South Dakota and Wyoming, in addition to those in the Rocky Mountain State.

"CHI PACC ensures that Colorado families no longer have to CHOOSE between the hospice and palliative care services that they so desperately need and the possibility of a cure," said Hefley in the joint letter. "They will be able to pursue both simultaneously." At the same time, it reduces costs, resulting in savings for the states and federal governments through Medicaid. The Colorado demonstration showed a savings to the state of \$20,565 per patient.

Hefley, who circulated the letter and has yielded strong support for the CHI PACC program, added: "Initial demonstrations have shown significant potential cost savings in four states -- Colorado, Florida, New York and Utah. The CHI PACC program signifies a true federal-state partnership. It has received extensive bipartisan, bicameral support since its inception."

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Earlier this month, members of the Congressional delegation attended events in Washington, D.C. and Denver sponsored by CHI to announce the selection of Dr. Brian Greffe, a pediatric oncologist, to head the national CHI PACC program. Greffe also heads The Butterfly Program in Denver.

"We are all proud that Colorado is the first state on many fronts," said Allard, a key supporter of the CHI PACC initiative. "This is the first program of its kind in the West; and the first that will serve children from an entire region."

Colorado's First Lady Frances Owens agreed -- praising Colorado for its role in developing the innovative national CHI PACC effort: "Colorado's leadership on this important program is significant and is a model for the nation," she said at a Dec. 12 briefing of the program in Denver.

"By providing key support services to children and their families as they cope with life-threatening conditions, we are all working to ensure that the immediate needs of our most fragile citizens are met," said Senator Ken Salazar. "This is a significant contribution toward the quality of life of Colorado's most courageous children and families."

"CHI PACC represents a win-win-win for the federal and state governments -- and for families," said Tancredo at an event on Dec. 8 in Washington, D.C.

"The children and families of Colorado, and our neighboring states, need this as soon as possible. I am thrilled that our state is a leader in making it happen," he said.

Members of the Colorado delegation also noted that "the CHI PACC program can be adapted to help U.S. military families."

"We are deeply grateful for the support of the Colorado's elected officials in this worthy endeavor -- and I look forward to our continued working relationship as we keep this program for families in the Rocky Mountain region moving forward," said CHI Founding Director and CEO Ann Armstrong-Dailey.

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For more information about the Colorado or national CHI PACC initiatives, or about Children's Hospice International, please call 703-684-0330 or go to <http://www.chionline.org>.