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U.S. HIV Care Providers Speak Out On HIV Issues
In Washington, D.C.
Members of Congress, HRSA and CMS Officials Offer Insight,
Listen to Provider Concerns

Washington, D.C. U.S. front line HIV care providers called on Capitol Hill on May 3 and 4, 2006, during the third annual White Coat Days event, speaking out to officials and legislators about issues affecting their quality of HIV care delivery for hundreds of thousands of people living with HIV/AIDS throughout country. White Coat Days is a project of the American Academy of HIV Medicine (AAHIVM), The AIDS Institute (TAI), and the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care (ANAC).

The message of HIV care providers brought to policy decision makers was Increase, Respect and Protect: Increase the access to care and treatment by making legislative improvements to (increase funding for) Ryan White and Medicare and that will allow patients to get the care they need, including minimum formularies for ADAP and the passage of the Early Treatment for HIV Act (ETHA). Respect the practice of HIV Medicine by prioritizing the attraction, training, and retention of new medical providers to take care of the growing HIV-infected patient population in the reauthorization of the CARE Act and Bureau of Health Professions at HRSA. Protect patients from burdensome costs by making legislative changes that reverse increases in cost-sharing under Medicare and Medicaid.

Highlights of the event included remarks by Dr. Jeff Kelman, Chief Medical Officer for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS); Dr. Deborah Parham-Hopson, Associate Administrator of HRSA, and Representative Donna Christiansen (D-VI).

Rep. Christiansen was on hand to address the group at an opening evening reception at the United Methodist Building on May 3, and participated in a landmark meeting of leading African American HIV care providers participating in White Coat Days and staff of Congressional Black Caucus members, taking questions and engaging in substantive discussions during both events.

"It was a really rewarding experience," said AAHIVM member Dr. David Parks and first time White Coat Days participant, who came to D.C. from St. Louis, MO. "I appreciated being able to go the office of my members of Congress and to talk about what was important to me as an HIV care provider. They really listened and paid attention to my story."

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The American Academy of HIV Medicine (AAHIVM) is the largest independent organization of frontline HIV health care providers in the United States. To date it is the only U.S. organization credentialing physicians, nurse practitioners and physician assistants as HIV Specialists™. Founded in January 2000, AAHIVM has uniquely supported HIV health care providers through its outreach to a diverse and dedicated community of practitioners, and through its innovative initiatives to advance excellence in the quality of HIV care delivery by educating those practitioners and advocating on their behalf.

The AIDS Institute is a national nonprofit agency that promotes action for social change through public policy research, advocacy and education.

The Association of Nurses in AIDS Care (ANAC) is the nursing organization and leader in response to HIV disease and AIDS. Founded in 1987, ANAC seeks to meet the needs of nurses in HIV/AIDS care, research, prevention, and policy.

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