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Citizens' Health Care Working Group Recommends Core Health Care Services for All By 2012

Americans Have 90 Days To Comment On Interim Recommendations

Washington, D.C. – The Citizens' Health Care Working Group – authorized in the 2003 Medicare Modernization Act – today announced the release of Interim Recommendations on how to make health care work for all Americans. The recommendations reflect input from over 20,000 citizens who participated in more than seventy five community meetings nationwide or provided their input online. The public has until August 31st to comment on the Interim Recommendations. Final recommendations will be issued at the end of September and will be sent to the President for review and to the Congress, which will hold hearings.

The Working Group recommends:

- ◆ A public policy that all Americans have affordable health care
- ◆ A “core” benefits package for all Americans
- ◆ Guaranteed financial protection against very high health care costs
- ◆ Development of integrated community health networks
- ◆ More intensive efforts to improve quality of care and efficiency
- ◆ New ways to provide and finance palliative care, hospice and other services, so that people living with advanced incurable conditions have access to them in the environment they choose

Comments on the interim recommendations may be submitted online to the web site www.CitizensHealthCare.gov; by physical mail addressed to the Citizens' Health Care Working Group, Attn: Interim Recommendations, 7201 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 575, Bethesda, MD 20814; or by email, CitizensHealth@ahrq.gov. Additional information about the recommendations, the process used to seek public input, and findings from the Working Group's meetings and internet poll can also be found at the website.

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About the Citizens' Health Care Working Group

The Citizens' Health Care Working Group is a nonpartisan, independent body whose members were tasked with engaging the public in a nationwide discussion of the nation's health care system and charged with developing recommendations for the President and Congress to provide U.S. citizens with "Health Care that Works for All Americans." The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality provides administrative support as directed by the Medicare Modernization Act.

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