

Medline Joins Long-Term Care Community on Capitol Hill to Educate Lawmakers on Important Healthcare Reform Issues

Medline joined a group of more than 300 members of the long-term care (LTC) community on Capitol Hill during the first week of June to lobby lawmakers on important healthcare reform issues. Their mission was to support our customers by helping them stand up for policies that will protect LTC funding and maintain quality patient care. Their forum was the American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL) 2009 Congressional Briefing.

For the fourth year running, Medline sponsored this two-day event to give healthcare providers and association members a voice on priority LTC issues, including the proposed regulation that will cut Medicare funding by approximately \$1.05 million in 2010 and \$18 billion over 10 years.

We are in a critical negotiation period for LTC reform. American Health Care Association President and CEO Bruce Yarwood said that because Congress is already trying to tackle the issue of universal healthcare coverage, there won't be enough time for long-term care reform to be addressed.

"Providers have an awesome responsibility of carrying the word to Capitol Hill," Yarwood said.

And that's exactly what Medline is trying to do. Briefing participants gathered for an opening session and heard from AHCA/NCAL leaders as well as Howard Fineman, NBC News Analyst and Newsweek's Senior Washington Correspondent; Chris Wright, president of the Connecticut Association of Health Care Facilities and Congressman John Larson (DCT).

The group then commenced its congressional visits, meeting with members of Congress to discuss the key issues. The talking points included Medicare and Medicaid cuts, and workforce issues and legal reform.