



National  
Multiple Sclerosis  
Society

## Support Comprehensive Health Care Reform

### Request

Our nation is poised to move forward by reforming our ailing health care system. For health care reform to be successful, it must be comprehensive and meaningful. On behalf of people living with multiple sclerosis (MS) and other chronic diseases and disabilities, **the National Multiple Sclerosis Society urges you to support comprehensive health care reform in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress.**

### Position

Multiple sclerosis is an unpredictable, often disabling disease of the central nervous system. Symptoms range from numbness and tingling to blindness and paralysis. The progress, severity, and specific symptoms of MS in any one person cannot yet be predicted. The cost of disease modifying therapies and symptom treatments can be staggering, and they are not always fully covered by insurance.

The National MS Society created a set of National Health Care Reform Principles to map out and ensure that the needs of people with MS and other chronic diseases and disabilities are met.

The Society's Principles support:

- Accessible health care coverage
- Affordable health care services and coverage
- Standards for coverage of specific treatments
- Elimination of disparities in care
- Comprehensive, quality health care available to all
- Increased value of health care
- Access to high-quality, long-term supports and services



We urge you to consider the above principles as you develop and support any action moving our nation toward meaningful, comprehensive health care reform.

### Supporting Rationale

- The United States health care system is broken. We spend more money per capita on healthcare than any other country with fewer positive outcomes. We must reassess how to more effectively promote health and wellness by restructuring the health care system to address the needs of all Americans.
- Specific issues that affect not just those with MS but others with chronic diseases and disabilities that should be addressed include: limiting out-of-pocket expenses; increasing or eliminating lifetime coverage caps; eliminating Medicare's 24-month disability waiting period; addressing the issue of access and availability of long-term supports and services so that people can remain in their homes and communities; and, many others.
- A more efficient and effective operation of the nation's health care system will produce long-term cost savings by encouraging better treatments and prevention for chronic diseases and disabilities.
- Comprehensive health care reform is a necessary component and an important step in helping to restore our nation's economy. By eliminating the mismanagement of programs within the current system, people living with a chronic disease or disability will have access to higher quality care that is not limited by its administrative, financial, and lifestyle barriers.