



**Hospice
Action
Network**

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WHO WE ARE

The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) is the largest membership organization representing hospice and palliative care programs and professionals in the United States. We represent over 4,000 hospice programs that care for the majority of hospice patients in the US. NHPCO is committed to improving end-of-life care and expanding access to hospice so that individuals and families facing serious illness, death, and grief will experience the best care that humankind can offer.

Palliative Care and Hospice Education and Training Act

Hospice and palliative care are both patient-centered models of care that address patients' physical, emotional, psychosocial, spiritual and familial needs. Both hospice and palliative care utilize inter-disciplinary teams of providers who optimize quality of life by anticipating, preventing, and treating suffering. In a 2010 study published in the New England Journal of Medicine, patients that received palliative care early after diagnosis had a better quality of life, experienced less frequent depression, and lived longer than their counterparts who did not receive palliative care.

Research from the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine (AAHPM) indicates that there is a shortage of adequately trained hospice or palliative care providers. Moreover, the current rates of educating and training medical professionals in palliative care will not be sufficient to ensure aging Americans access to quality palliative care. Additionally, a 2017 study by the George Washington University Healthcare Institute estimates that there will be no more than 1 percent growth in the palliative care and hospice physician workforce in the next 20 years, while the number of people eligible for palliative care will increase by over 20 percent. Without a boost for palliative care education and training, there will be only one palliative physician for every 26,000 seriously ill patients by 2030.

The Palliative Care and Hospice Education and Training Act (or **PCHETA**, S. 693 and H.R. 1676) addresses this problem by providing palliative medicine training in a variety of settings, including hospice. This bi-partisan, bi-cameral legislation will also establish a program to enable hospice and palliative physicians to train teams of interdisciplinary healthcare professionals in palliative and hospice care techniques. Additionally, PCHETA will expand the types of professionals trained to provide hospice care, including nurses and clinical social workers.

PCHETA is sponsored in the Senate by Senators Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) and Tammy Baldwin (D-WI). In the House of Representatives, Congressmen Eliot Engel (D-NY), Tom Reed (R-NY), and Buddy Carter (R-GA) lead the bill.

“As someone who has cared for aging parents, I understand how important palliative and hospice care is and how much support and comfort it provides to patients and their families. I feel strongly we must strengthen training and education options to those involved in these fields so we can continue delivering quality care for those in the final stages of life.”

-Senator Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV)

For more information on this legislation, contact Sharon Pearce at spearce@nhpco.org.