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September 1, 1999

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The Honorable Charles Norwood  
1707 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Norwood:

On behalf of the American Physical Therapy Association, I am writing to express our endorsement of H.R. 2723, the Bipartisan Consensus Managed Care Improvement Act of 1999. The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) is a national organization representing over 70,000 physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, and students of physical therapy.

APTA has long been a supporter of greater patients' rights in managed health care plans. APTA believes that any patient protection legislation should, at a minimum, include:

- **Point-of-Service Option** – This allows patients to see providers out of network if they agree to pay a reasonable co-payment. A choice between two closed-panel plans does **not** constitute a point-of-service option.
- **Access** – Patients should have access to a sufficient number of providers to receive the benefits offered by a plan and should have access to specialists within and outside a plan. There should be enough physical therapists on a panel to provide services to all members of a plan within a reasonable time period.
- **Gag Rule** – Plans should not be able to prevent providers from discussing various treatment options, such as physical therapy, with their patients.
- **Accountability** – Patients should be able to hold their health plan accountable for the decisions of medical necessity that the plan makes. This includes a strong internal and external review process that allows patients and their health care providers to appeal treatment denials made by the plan.

H.R. 2723 includes these necessary provisions to ensure protections of patients in managed health care plans. We commend you for your efforts on behalf of all patients and look forward to working with you to ensure that quality care is available to all Americans.

Sincerely,



Nancy Garland, Esq.  
Director of Government Affairs

CSM 2000  
Combined Sections Meeting  
February 2-6  
New Orleans, LA

Physical Therapy 2000:  
The Annual Conference  
& Exposition of the  
American Physical Therapy  
Association  
June 14-18  
Indianapolis, IN