



SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY **WEDNESDAY** IN WASHINGTON THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

April 20, 2005

House Aide Warns of “Numerous” Legislative Changes to Medicare

Citing the need to reconcile House and Senate versions of the 2006 budget, a Republican House aide warned yesterday that there could be “numerous” legislative changes to Medicare, according to a report in *CQ Today*.

Preventing any additional cuts to homecare programs in Medicare is a top priority for the American Association for Homecare (AAHomecare). During the weeks and months ahead, **AAHomecare is urging homecare providers to educate their Members of Congress about the benefits and importance of homecare** to their Members’ home districts.

The Washington Leadership Conference, June 7-10, will provide opportunities for direct contact with Congressional Members on homecare issues. For conference details, visit www.aahomecare.org. The early registration discount is available through April 22 (Friday).

Secretary Leavitt Says Homecare Is “Radically More Efficient”

Last Friday, Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Michael Leavitt again called for more home- and community-based care in Medicaid.

Discussing areas of consensus he said he has gleaned from meetings with virtually every governor in the U.S., Leavitt said, “We need to change the basic construct of Medicaid to allow for home and community care to be used. **It’s not only where people want be served, but it’s radically more efficient.** And it doesn’t mean that we are not going to be spending money on

healthcare but it means we are going to be in a place where we can in fact serve more people.” Kay Cox, President and CEO of the American Association for Homecare, applauded Secretary Leavitt’s remarks. “Homecare is a key part of the solution to America’s healthcare crisis, and its role should be recognized in both Medicare and Medicaid.”

Leavitt made the comments at a meeting of the National Conference of State Legislatures in Washington, DC.

New Hampshire Homecare Association Takes State to Court Over Medicaid Pay

The Home Care Association of New Hampshire has taken legal action against the state arguing that New Hampshire does not pay enough of the cost of home health services, the Associated Press reported today.

The association is asking a judge to force New Hampshire to follow a law that requires review of Medicaid rates each year, arguing that the Department of Health and Human Services has not conducted the review since 1999.

Susan Young, director of the association, said agencies will have to cut programs because of the gap between the cost of their services and what the state pays in Medicaid reimbursements. See www.homecarenh.org.

Next CMS Home Health, Hospice & DME Open Door Is April 21

The next Home Health, Hospice & DME Open Door Forum hosted by CMS will be on April 21 at 2:00 p.m. EDT. To participate, dial 1-800-837-1935 and use reference #4882728.