

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 12, 2012

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader Reid and Leader McConnell:

We write to you regarding an opportunity to improve patient health and reduce health care system costs. Research shows that only 50 percent of patients properly adhere to their prescription drug therapy regimens, and poor medication adherence costs the nation approximately \$290 billion a year, nearly 13 percent of total health care expenditures. In addition, it is also associated with about \$47 billion a year in drug-related hospitalizations and an estimated 40 percent of nursing home admissions.

We believe the best way to make sure Americans use medications effectively is through professional services offered by pharmacists and other qualified healthcare providers, including “medication therapy management” (MTM). MTM helps prevent medication errors, ensures medication compliance, and gets patients more involved in their medication therapy. Evidence shows that MTM improves outcomes and reduces unnecessary medical costs. In fact, one study shows that for every \$1 invested in MTM programs, overall healthcare costs were reduced by \$12 (Journal of the American Pharmacists Assoc, March-April 2008). In the North Carolina “ChecKmeds” program, MTM helped 31,000 seniors optimize their drug therapy for a savings of \$34 million – a return on investment of nearly 14 to 1.

Under the current Medicare Part D program, seniors must suffer from “multiple chronic conditions” and be prescribed “multiple medications” before they are eligible for MTM services. As a result, only one quarter of seniors currently have access to MTM, while many more could benefit from the service. We support and urge inclusion in any appropriate end of year legislation language that would allow seniors who suffer from any chronic disease that accounts for high spending in the Medicare program to benefit from MTM should that intervention result in savings to the Medicare program.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,


KAY R. HAGAN
United States Senator


DANIEL AKAKA
United States Senator



SHERROD BROWN
United States Senator



AL FRANKEN
United States Senator



TIM JOHNSON
United States Senator



BARBARA MIKULSKI
United States Senator



KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND
United States Senator



THAD COCHRAN
United States Senator