

American Psychiatric Association

1000 Wilson Boulevard
Suite 1825
Arlington, VA 22209
Telephone 703.907.7300
Fax 703.907.1085
E-mail apa@psych.org
Internet www.psych.org

Board of the Trustees 2007-2008

Carolyn B. Robinowitz, M.D.
President
Nada L. Stotland, M.D., M.P.H.
President-Elect
Carol Bernstein, M.D.
Vice President
Donna M. Norris, M.D.
Secretary-Treasurer

Pedro Ruiz, M.D.
Steven S. Sharfstein, M.D.
Michelle B. Riba, M.D., M.S.
Past Presidents

David Fassler, M.D.
Roger Peele, M.D.
Amy M. Ursano, M.D.
Jeffrey L. Geller, M.D.
Ann Marie T. Sullivan, M.D.
John C. Urbairis, M.D.
Sidney H. Weissman, M.D.
Mary Helen Davis, M.D.
Thomas K. Ciesla, M.D.
William M. Womack, M.D.
Abigail L. Donovan, M.D.
Lauren M. Sitzer, M.D., M.A., Ed.M.
Trustees

Assembly 2007-2008

Jeffrey Akaka, M.D.
Speaker
Ronald M. Burd, M.D.
Speaker-Elect
Gary M. Weinstein, M.D.
Recorder

Staff

James H. Scully, Jr., M.D.
Medical Director and CEO
Ronald E. McMillen
Chief Executive Officer,
American Psychiatric Publishing, Inc.
Darrel Regier, M.D., M.P.H.
Executive Director,
American Psychiatric Institute for
Research and Education
Irvin Muszynski, J.D.
Acting Executive Director,
American Psychiatric Foundation

August 6, 2007

The Honorable John D. Dingell
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Dingell:

On behalf of the American Psychiatric Association, the medical specialty representing more than 38,000 psychiatric physicians nationwide, I would like to thank you for your leadership in ensuring that the Children's Health and Medicare Protection (CHAMP) Act of 2007, H.R. 3162, included a landmark change in Medicare coverage of outpatient treatment for mental illness.

Section 203 of the CHAMP Act ends Medicare's 40 years of discrimination against beneficiaries requiring outpatient psychiatric services. Since the Medicare program was signed into law 42 years ago, enrollees have been required by law to pay a coinsurance of 50 percent for outpatient mental health services – two and one half times the customary 20 percent coinsurance paid for other Medicare Part B services. There is no justification for making beneficiaries pay half the cost of their care simply because they need mental health care.

For over 20 years, the APA has worked to end Medicare's discrimination against patients in need of psychiatric care. Our members applaud you for taking this historic action in support of our patients. With a difficult negotiation process ahead, we urge your continued support for Medicare mental health fairness.

The APA commends you on House passage of the Children's Health and Medicare Protection Act, and our 38,000 psychiatric physicians extend their gratitude to you for supporting the mental health needs of our patients.

Sincerely,



Carolyn B. Robinowitz, M.D.
President

