



## AUDIOLOGY PATIENTS WITH MEDICARE COVERAGE

**ALERT ALERT ALERT ALERT**

### Contact Your Congressional Representative Today and Urge Support for the Audiology Patient Choice Act of 2017 (H.R. 2276)

H.R. 2276 is bi-partisan, common-sense legislation that, if enacted, will allow audiology patients with Medicare coverage to have the same access to audiology care that most Americans and all of Congress already have through private insurers.

#### The Audiology Patient Choice Act will specifically:

**Allow seniors** with a suspected hearing or balance disorder to seek treatment directly from audiologists.

**Allow Medicare** to reimburse audiologists for all Medicare-covered services that they are licensed to provide.

**Address the medical doctor shortage** confronting our country, through the inclusion of audiologists in the list of Medicare-recognized physicians (chiropractors, dentists, doctors of osteopathy, medical doctors, optometrists and podiatrists).

**Visit the Audiology Patient Advocacy Action Center** at [18x18.org/patient-resource-center](http://18x18.org/patient-resource-center) for more information about the Audiology Patient Choice Act and to access the *Congressional Connect* website tool to contact your legislator in just a few clicks of your mouse. The process takes less than five minutes and can make a lasting impact on improving access to audiology services for seniors. If you or someone that you love is a Medicare recipient with a suspected or confirmed hearing or balance disorder, please act today to encourage Congress to pass H.R. 2276!

#### DID YOU KNOW?

- Hearing loss is the third most common chronic disorder for Americans over 65, behind only arthritis and high blood pressure.
- Nearly half of Americans over age 75 suffer from hearing loss.
- Individuals with mild hearing loss are three times more likely to experience a fall. Falls are the leading cause of injury and death for Americans over 65, as well as the most common cause of injuries and hospital admissions for trauma.
- Untreated hearing and balance problems contribute to and are highly correlated with depression and social isolation. Treatment reduces societal and financial costs.
- Seniors with hearing loss run a much higher risk of cognitive problems and experience cognitive decline up to 40% faster than those with normal hearing.
- The Association of American Medical Colleges projects there will be a shortage of 46,000 medical doctor specialists over the next decade.

