

America's Hospitals and Health Systems

July 2, 2010

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
United States Secretary of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW
Room 615-F
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Madam Secretary:

The undersigned hospital associations support your and the administration's initiative to secure the right of all patients to designate individuals who shall enjoy the same visitation privileges as immediate family members. We also support your work to ensure that hospitals fully respect the informed medical decisions of a patient representative who has been designated under legally valid advance directives, such as a health care proxy or durable power of attorney.

Our hospitals are committed to compassionate, patient-centered care and will continue to work to ensure that patients' preferences are respected. In the interim, and within the boundaries of state law, we will encourage our member hospitals to review their policies to ensure that they promote the visitation and decision-making rights of the individuals designated by the patients for whom we care.

Sincerely,

American Hospital Association
Association of American Medical Colleges
Catholic Health Association of the United States
Federation of American Hospitals
National Association of Children's Hospitals
National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems