

August Is Congressional Recess Education Month

Invite Your Members of Congress to Visit Your Agency

As members of Congress return to their districts during the month of August, the National Council urges you to invite your Representatives and Senators to visit your agency while they are in the district, July 31-September 1, 2006. The National Council encourages you to focus the visit on the proposed cuts and definition changes to case management and rehabilitative services.

Materials For Your Visits

In order to make your visit as successful as possible, the National Council suggests preparing a packet of materials to leave with the Representative or Senator. Items you may wish to include:

- Your organization's most recent annual report
- A list of board members
- Descriptions of your programs and other organization highlights
- Business cards
- Overview of issues that affect your organization or state
- Your calendar, so that you can establish a date for a site visit to your organization by the Representative or Senator and/or their legislative staff

Prepare for Your Visits

Having answers to the following types of questions will help prepare you for your visits. In addition, if you have met with the Representative or Senator in the past, keep in mind any areas of particular interest or concern.

- How many consumers does your organization serve annually?
- How many people does your organization employ?
- What do case management and/or rehabilitative services look like at your organization? Give examples of what these services are and what they can do for consumers.
- What would changes in the definitions of case management and/or rehabilitative services mean for your organization?

Key Talking Points

The National Council suggests focusing on the following key points in your visits:

- The National Council urges all members of Congress to oppose the proposed changes to case management and rehabilitative services.
- Provide examples of how restrictions to services cost more because they keep agencies from offering the most beneficial forms of care.
- **Giving community mental health providers access to the full range of billable care allows providers to offer more effective care and allows consumers to participate more fully in their communities.**

Contact the National Council

Please let the National Council know when you have scheduled an appointment by contacting Allison Fort at allisonf@nccbh.org, or (301) 984-6200, x235. This allows the National Council to track and follow up on your efforts.