National Health Council Thanks House Committee for Working with Patients to Address Unmet Medical Needs in 21st Century Cures

Washington, DC (April 29, 2015) – The National Health Council (NHC) today thanked the U.S. House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee for including in its latest 21st Century Cures legislative discussion draft a placeholder to address “repurposing drugs for serious and life-threatening diseases and conditions.”

NHC Chief Executive Officer Marc Boutin issued the following statement in response to the Committee’s action:

“The patient advocacy community has been working tirelessly to ensure that medicines which address chronic conditions with limited or no treatment options are brought to market. We call it dormant therapies. The discussion draft released today calls it ‘repurposing of drugs.’ [Section 2151] We are pleased that the House Energy and Commerce Committee has agreed to address this health imperative in their legislative draft. We look forward to working with Committee Members and staff to finalize the language and to create appropriate incentives to encourage the development of treatments for unmet medical needs.”

In addition to the provision addressing drugs for unmet medical needs, the National Health Council supports other elements in the 21st Century Cures draft that will improve care for people with chronic conditions, including provisions to:

- Increase funding for the National Institutes of Health [Title I-Subtitle A: National Institutes of Health Funding]
- Incorporate patient perspective data in the FDA’s benefit/risk framework [Title II -Subtitle A: Patient-Focused Drug Development]
- Reduce regulatory duplication and unnecessary delays in the Institutional Review Board approval process [Title II-Subtitle N: Streamlining Clinical Trials]
- Allow patients to have their health information used for research, expand appropriate remote access of patient data, allow entities collecting patient data to use it for research, and treat research using patient information like other public health activities [Title I-Subtitle G-Section 1124: Accessing, Sharing, and Using Health Data For Research Purposes]

About the National Health Council:
Founded in 1920, the National Health Council (NHC) is the only organization that brings together all segments of the health community to provide a united and effective voice for the more than 133 million people living with chronic diseases and disabilities and their

(more)
family caregivers. Made up of more than 100 national health-related organizations and businesses, its core membership includes the nation’s leading patient advocacy organizations, which control its governance. Other members include professional and membership associations, nonprofit organizations with an interest in health, and major pharmaceutical, health insurance, medical device, and biotechnology companies. Visit www.nationalhealthcouncil.org to learn more about the NHC and how it is committed to Putting Patients First®.

Additional Information:

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