



Patient groups warn: Administration policy encourages discrimination in health care

WASHINGTON, D.C., June 15, 2020 – *Today 29 patient and consumer groups representing millions of people nationwide with pre-existing health conditions issued the following statement in response to administration’s final rule. The rule, finalized Friday, attempts to undermine Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act by removing explicit protections against discrimination of patients by providers and institutions:*

“By finalizing these changes, the Administration tries to unwind significant advances that have ensured vulnerable populations, including individuals with pre-existing conditions, are free from discrimination and able to access healthcare. The elimination of these important protections will result in severe consequences for the health and well-being of Americans seeking health care, especially those with serious, acute, chronic or other pre-existing conditions and those in vulnerable and under-served communities.

Many Americans and their dependents will now be less likely to access preventive, diagnostic, and critical health care, or to enforce their rights to obtain such care. This is especially detrimental to the

health and well-being of those living with pre-existing conditions, as well as women, LGBTQI+ individuals, people with disabilities, and those with limited English proficiency.

These communities have long faced discrimination, bias, stigma, substandard care, and the denial of care. We are disturbed that the Administration is trying to undermine the equitable application and enforcement of the law—and making it more likely that providers and institutions will discriminate against millions of Americans in need of health care.

Particularly as the world confronts a global pandemic, these actions have no place within our system of care and put the public's health at risk. Those that fear discrimination will be less likely to seek care and treatment for COVID-19. This puts the entire population at risk and undermines federal, state, and local efforts to control the virus. As a result, we express our continued opposition and deep concern over the changes finalized by the administration and urge immediate action to prevent this regulation from taking full effect.”

Alpha-1 Foundation
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Kidney Fund
American Lung Association
Cancer Support Community
CancerCare
Chronic Disease Coalition
COPD Foundation
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation
Epilepsy Foundation
Family Voices
Hemophilia Federation of America
Immune Deficiency Foundation
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
Mended Hearts & Mended Little Hearts
Muscular Dystrophy Association
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Health Council
National Hemophilia Foundation
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Organization for Rare Disorders
National Patient Advocate Foundation
National Psoriasis Foundation
Pulmonary Hypertension Association
Susan G. Komen
The AIDS Institute
The American Liver Foundation
United Way Worldwide
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease