

## Everybody's Surfing Now . . .

The Worldwide Web provides endless opportunities to expand your knowledge surrounding current legislative activities. The Web can be used to read bill language, track a bill as it moves through the legislative process, and contact your elected officials via email.

### Informative Sites to Bookmark are:

#### ■ United States Government

Congress..... [www.Congress.org](http://www.Congress.org)  
Democratic National Committee [www.democrats.org](http://www.democrats.org)  
House of Representatives..... [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)  
Library of Congress ..... [www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov)  
Republican National Committee ..... [www.mc.org](http://www.mc.org)  
Senate ..... [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)  
Thomas ..... [www.thomas.loc.gov](http://www.thomas.loc.gov)  
U.S. Government Printing Office... [www.access.gpo.gov](http://www.access.gpo.gov)  
The White House..... [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)

#### ■ Federal Agencies

Agency for Healthcare Research  
and Quality..... [www.ahrp.gov](http://www.ahrp.gov)  
Center for Disease Control ..... [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)  
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid  
Services ..... [www.hcfa.gov](http://www.hcfa.gov)  
Department of Health and Human  
Services ..... [www.dhhs.gov](http://www.dhhs.gov)  
Federal Register ..... [www.access.gpo.gov](http://www.access.gpo.gov)

#### ■ National Institutes of Health/

##### National Cancer Institute

CancerNet ..... [www.cancernet.nci.nih.gov](http://www.cancernet.nci.nih.gov)  
National Cancer Institute..... [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)  
National Institutes of Health..... [www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov)

#### ■ Media References

*New York Times* (Political Points) [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)  
*Washington Post* ..... [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)  
*RollCall* Online ..... [www.rollcall.com](http://www.rollcall.com)  
*Rock the Vote* ..... [www.rockthevote.org](http://www.rockthevote.org)

### Patient Advocate Foundation

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# A Greater Understanding Discovering Your Role as a Volunteer



**PAF** Patient Advocate  
Foundation

Solving Insurance and Healthcare Access Problems | since 1996

# A Greater Understanding

Dear Volunteer Advocate,

Congratulations on your interest in the very rewarding work of patient advocacy! Through the National Patient Advocate Foundation Advocates Alliance for Action, a volunteer advocacy program comprised of patients, caregivers, physicians, nurses, attorneys, patient advocates, and patient services professionals, you will discover ways in which you can make a remarkable difference in the lives of people in your community and in America.

As a member of this special team, you will have the opportunity to influence healthcare legislation, educate your community on the direct patient services provided by PAF, and help NPAF continue the work of our mission.

We welcome you to the National Patient Advocate Foundation volunteer network.

Sincerely,  
NPAF Advocates Coordinator Team - ACT

- Volunteers
- Volunteer State Chairpersons
- Director of State Government Affairs
- Director of Federal Government Affairs
- Chief Executive Officer

### Patient Advocate Foundation

#### ■ MISSION STATEMENT

Patient Advocate Foundation is a national non-profit organization that serves as an active liaison between the patient and their insurer, employer and/or creditors to resolve insurance, job retention and/or debt crisis matters relative to their diagnosis through case managers, doctors and attorneys. Patient Advocate Foundation seeks to safeguard patients through effective mediation assuring access to care, maintenance of employment and preservation of their financial stability.

### Advocates Alliance for Action

#### ■ MISSION STATEMENT

The NPAF Advocates Alliance for Action is a volunteer advocacy program comprised of patients, caregivers, physicians, nurses, attorneys, patient advocates, and patient services professionals. The Advocates serve as an information network for the purpose of:

- Educating elected officials at both the state and federal levels about policy and legislative reform that improves, restores, and/or maintains access to care and reimbursement for the complete cycle of health-care services required from a point of early detection to the end of life care.
- Educating the public on the patient services provided by Patient Advocate Foundation, and
- Supporting the fundraising efforts of the Patient Advocate Foundation that allow financial support for state Lobby Day programs, attendance at Patient Congress in Washington, D.C. and attendance at regional and national advocacy training events.

To register as a member of the NPAF Advocates Alliance for Action, contact: NPAF Public Policy Department at (202) 347-8009 or [action@npaf.org](mailto:action@npaf.org), or visit our website: [www.npaf.org](http://www.npaf.org).

#### Editors Note:

*This is the fifth in the series "A Greater Understanding" brochures developed by the Patient Advocate Foundation. The information contained herein is in response to frequently asked questions (FAQ's) by patients. This brochure is intended to provide a general yet informative response to these inquiries. Any incident, inquiry or issue may vary according to these specific facts and circumstances relating to the individual.*

## Public Information Campaign: Let Your Voice Be Heard!

Elected officials in the United States Congress and the state General Assemblies are charged with the very difficult responsibility of reforming healthcare. It is through the voice of patients, caregivers, and medical professionals that legislators will learn how pending legislation will affect Americans. It is your right as a citizen to build strong relationships with legislators and to influence positive change in policy.

Through the volunteer network, the PAF Advocates Coordinator Team (ACT), will educate you on **state and federal** initiatives. You will be kept up-to-date on the current status of bills, who in your state is signed on as a co-sponsor, and what action is needed to move the legislation.

Armed with this information, we encourage you to contact your elected officials, at both the state and federal level, to express your position. An effective way to communicate is through a personalized letter that clearly and concisely explains the issue at hand.

Members of the **United States Congress** can be easily reached by postal mail:

The Honorable (First and Last Name)  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510  
*Dear Senator (last name):*

The Honorable (First and Last Name)  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20510  
*Dear Representative (last name):*

The contact information for **state legislators** can be found through the National Conference of State Legislatures website at [www.ncsl.org](http://www.ncsl.org).

**Please visit [www.npaf.org](http://www.npaf.org) for more information on healthcare legislation.**

For more details on how to effectively communicate with legislators, contact the PAF Public Policy Department at 1-800-532-5274 or [info@patientadvocate.org](mailto:info@patientadvocate.org) and request the *Your Right...Your Choice...Your Privilege* publication.

### Public Outreach: Bring PAF to Your Community!

According to the results of a Kaiser Family Survey in 2000, one in two Americans reported that they have had a problem with their health insurance plan in the last year. Although most problems appear minor and easy to resolve, a significant minority involve serious reported consequences and are difficult to settle. The survey of 2,500 insured adults ages 18-64 found that most consumers are confused about where to turn for help resolving problems with their health plans.

### You can help PAF help others by promoting our services throughout your town.

We encourage you to distribute PAF educational materials throughout your community in places such as:

- Local Hospitals
- Medical Clinics
- Civic Organizations
- Worship Centers

PAF professional case managers and the volunteer legal network specialize in mediation, negotiation, and education, on behalf of patients experiencing the following issues:

- Preauthorization
- Coding and Billing
- Insurance Appeal Process
- Expedited Appeal Process
- Access to Pharmaceutical Agents
- Access to Chemotherapy
- Access to Medical Devices
- Access to Surgical Procedures
- Expedited applications for Social Security Disability, Medicare, Medicaid, SCHIPS, and other social programs
- Debt Crisis
- Job Retention

However, we do not expect you to field specific patient questions. All requests for help should be directed to the PAF toll free patient hotline at 1-800-532-5274.

Please contact PAF Headquarters to request an application for your community literature: 1-800-532-5274 or [info@patientadvocate.org](mailto:info@patientadvocate.org).

### Hidden Treasure: Give a Promise of Hope!

In July 2000, the Patient Advocate Foundation received its lifetime non-profit status from the Internal Revenue Service. For our donors, this achievement allows contributions to PAF to be deducted at the highest possible tax deduction. Call 1-800-532-5274 for more details.

### Volunteers can support PAF fundraising efforts by:

- Organize a Walk-A-Thon in your community.
- Encourage your coworkers to pool their money into a group donation and encourage your employer to contribute a matching gift. Many employers are willing to give to an organization for which one of the employees is a volunteer.
- Host a fundraising event, such as a car wash, fashion show, bake sale, pig pickin', or lunch with a local celebrity.
- Host a "Stay-at-Home Tea"
- Participate in a Promise of Hope Affair:
  - Attend and bring a friend.
  - Contribute or solicit contributions for silent auction items.
- Participate in the Meet Your Newest Neighbor Campaign by distributing contribution envelopes to neighbors on your street, collecting donations, and returning donations to PAF.
- Support national fundraising campaigns, including sale of *Star-Studded Recipes*, a fabulous cookbook comprised of family recipes contributed by patients, caregivers, medical professionals, and staff.

♥ *"Being educated and informed is what we as patients and individuals need more of. You've helped open these doors, making the process easier to go through . . . Please continue to exist and be there for those of us who have to go through loads of unfair "red tape," just because we're physically and emotionally sick and worn down from health problems, pushed to the limit in seeking help. Thank you so much."*

*—Anne Rutherford  
Alabama*

