

**NHHF** organized the 2024 Capitol Hill Visits and the White House Briefing for participants of the NHHF and NHMA 30th Anniversary Leadership Summit and Gala Celebration in Washington, DC April 12-13, 2024.

**20 Capitol Hill Visits** were organized by Dr Rios with Jason and Cristofer from NHMA on the Congress meetings and with Guillermo from NHHF and Sol Ortega, Office of Public Engagement on the White House Briefing.

Meetings were scheduled for over physicians and medical students and health professionals to discuss our key priorities:

1. Reducing chronic diseases – support cholesterol awareness resolution to decrease heart disease and to support the Treat and Reduce Obesity Act (TROA) for seniors to have Medicare coverage of obesity medications. Note new obesity meds are available to veterans, Federal employees, those with diabetes, heart disease and addictions since they are covered by insurance. Increase prevention of disease programs and coverage of Medicaid, Medicare, Medicare Advantage.
2. Increasing Diversity in Medical Education – support bills to increase Hispanic students to attend medical school and other health careers (HCOP, COE) and Stem, mentoring and financial aid and support increased Residency Slots, increased IMG programs and workforce for rural and shortage areas. Increase the support for a Latino medical school.

White House Briefing for an hour and a half included discussions on current Biden Administration's accomplishments in health and environment as well as education to advance Hispanic health and the diversity in the workforce.

Physicians in the audience asked key questions about Daca and Immigrant support and access to health care for our patients --- and also about the importance of supporting financing for med students and increasing residency slots.

Overall feedback showed extreme interest in policy activities to provide input to federal leaders from our network of health care leaders who provide care in Latino communities. Dr. Rios worked with the staff on importance of following-up. Both NHMA and NHHF staff sent thank you notes and request for continued discussion.

NHHF meetings were planned for June.

## **NHHF joins other advocates in a letter to CMS Administrator Brooks-LaSure:**

We write to express our concern with a proposed revision to the Medicaid Drug Rebate Program (MDRP). While the proposal (CMS-2434-P) may be intended to reduce Medicaid spending on prescription drugs, in practice, it would impede the development of life-saving medicines. It would also sow administrative chaos throughout the supply chain, making it much more difficult for providers to give Medicaid beneficiaries the care they deserve.

As advocates representing patients in underserved and other marginalized groups that comprise a disproportionate share of the Medicaid population, we fear that the new rule would have a particularly devastating impact on underserved communities -- exacerbating health disparities already pervasive throughout the country.

## **Rios was able to share successful advocacy in a thank you email in May:**

Dear Health Equity Signers –

On Wednesday, May 15th, CMS announced that while it will continue to work on finalizing other parts of the Medicaid Drug Rebate Program (MDRP) proposed rule, "it will not be finalizing the proposal regarding stacking at this time." Instead, the agency will "pursue the collection of additional information from manufacturers related to best price stacking methodology to better understand and inform futurerulemaking."

See the announcement here:

<https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/cms-statement-misclassification-drugs-program-administration-and-program-integrity-updates-under>

I am glad that the administration listened to our health equity concerns. Thank you for your partnership and efforts on this issue.