

Patient Ambassador Monthly Meeting  
Wednesday August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011 Re-Cap Notes

**Washington DC Update**

Hrant Jamgochian, Executive Director

🌐 *Legislative and Regulatory Issues Update:*

- Quality Incentive Program (QIP):
  - DPC sent a letter to the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services regarding the QIP
  - Highlights of the letter include DPC's concerns about the timely reporting of data regarding quality of care, including a future long-term payment marker within the QIP, and concerns about the removal of the lower limit hemoglobin less than 10 g/dl entirely from the QIP.
  - The letter also includes DPC's desire to see the QIP used as an incentive program as the name implies, rather than as a penalty program, as it is currently designed.
- Health Care Reform:
  - DPC sent a letter to the Institutes of Medicine (IOM) in regard to the essential benefits package being designed under the health care reform law.
  - DPC urged the IOM to include dialysis and transplantation as essential benefits in the package they recommend to the Department of Health and Human Services.
- Washington, DC "fly-in" issues:
  - Several DPC activists will be attending meetings with their members of Congress in September.
  - The legislative agenda they will discuss with lawmakers includes:
    - Immunosuppressive Drug Coverage: Allowing all ESRD kidney transplant recipients under 65 to receive coverage of immunosuppressive drugs for the life of the transplant through Medicare Part B.
    - Deficit Debate: Dialysis patients have already seen a 2% cut through the bundled payment system and face another possible 2% cut through the QIP. DPC's activists will provide cost-saving alternatives to cuts that will still allow for patient choice.

### **Introduction of New Staff**

Andrea Blamble, Government Affairs Associate

Carrie Lamb, Grassroots Manager

🌐 *Andrea Blamble is the new Government Affairs Associate*

- Andrea is originally from Columbus, Ohio and recently graduated from Ohio University with a Bachelor's in Public Relations Journalism and a minor in Political Science. She has been a life-long advocate on health issues, volunteering with the Arthritis Foundation.
- The Government Affairs Associate position was recently created. In this position Andrea will be helping with event planning, attending meetings and hearings on Capitol Hill, writing for newsletters and assisting staff in day-to-day operations among other tasks.
- Andrea's email address is [ablamble@dialysispatients.org](mailto:ablamble@dialysispatients.org)

🌐 *Carrie Lamb is the new Grassroots Manager*

- Carrie is originally from New Paltz, New York. She graduated from Providence College with a Bachelor's in Political Science and is in her second year of the Masters of Public Administration program at American University. She is focusing her schoolwork on Health Policy and Management.
- Most recently Carrie worked for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society with both their federal and state policy teams, on issues including Medicare, Medicaid, long-term care and access to care among others.
- Carrie's email address is [clamb@dialysispatients.org](mailto:clamb@dialysispatients.org)