



September 2006

The Honorable Jim Talent
United States Senate
493 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Talent:

Thank you for your leadership in urging Medicare to not implement a competitive bidding program that could dramatically limit beneficiary access to quality, clinically appropriate blood glucose monitors and equipment they need to manage their condition.

The undersigned organizations support the principles that Medicare should do everything possible to eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse and control costs while preserving the highest quality healthcare for all beneficiaries. Any changes in procurement policy being considered by Medicare - such as the proposal in the April 2006 CMS Competitive Acquisition Program for diabetes equipment - **must not in any way diminish the quality of products available for doctors to prescribe to their patients or limit the ability of patients to access these products from their community pharmacy.**

Self Monitoring Blood Glucose (SMBG) equipment - medical technology that enables patients with diabetes to easily monitor their blood sugar levels as directed by their doctors - is indispensable in helping patients with diabetes manage their condition. As Medicare considers making changes that will significantly impact the quality of SMBGs available to beneficiaries with diabetes, we urge Congress to ensure Medicare abides by the following principles:

- ✓ Patients **must have access to quality, clinically appropriate medical products** that their health care professional determines are most appropriate to manage their diabetes.
- ✓ Medicare must **promote patients' ability to self-manage their care using SMBG equipment** and take no actions that would discourage patient self-management.
- ✓ Medicare **should not diminish the quality of care that beneficiaries currently receive** through customer service, help lines, and other technical supports.

- ✓ The Medicare system **must allow for the introduction of technological innovations** so as to ensure beneficiary access to new products that demonstrate clinical improvements.

On behalf of all Missourians with diabetes, we thank you again for helping lead efforts in the Senate to ensure Medicare abides by these principals and guarantees beneficiaries have access to the clinically appropriate diabetes products they need to manage their healthcare.

Sincerely,

Please sign your name below in black ink and return via fax to (866) 312-7442.

Name (Print): _____ **Title:** _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____ **City, State, Zip:** _____

There will be no changes made to the text of this letter. The letter and your signature will only be used in documents presented to Members of Congress.

If you have any questions regarding this document, please call DACC toll-free at 1 (888) 626-7616.