



Kaua'i Hospice
a special kind of caring

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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KAUA'I HOSPICE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ADVOCATES ON CAPITOL HILL FOR PATIENTS AND FAMILIES FACING END-OF-LIFE

Lori Miller asks Congress to Protect Access to High-Quality End-of-Life Care

Lihue, Hawaii – April 30, 2010 – Lori Miller, executive director of Kaua'i Hospice, and hundreds of hospice advocates from across the nation last week urged Congress to protect access to compassionate and high quality end-of-life care for all Americans. Miller joined her fellow advocates in Washington, D.C. as part of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization's (NHPCO) Capitol Hill Day 2010.

Miller met with Congresswoman Mazie Hirono (Hawaii – District 2) to discuss the value of hospice care to patients and their families in Hawaii. During the meeting, she thanked Congresswoman Hirono for her tireless efforts to stop cuts to hospice programs nationwide, especially smaller programs in more rural areas like Kaua'i.

"The hospice community is slated to undergo large budget cuts as a result of Medicare payment reform and the new health care reform legislation," said Miller. "Hill Day was a great opportunity to engage our members of Congress and discuss the value that hospice providers bring to Hawaii patients and families facing the end of life."

Over the past two years, the hospice community has been facing rate cuts on two fronts – regulatory cuts enacted in October 2009 that eliminated a key component of the Medicare hospice reimbursement known as the Budget Neutrality Adjustment Factor (BNAF) and, more recently, cuts slated to be enacted in 2013 as a result of the health care reform bill passed in March, 2010. Throughout 2010, advocates are working together to educate policy makers on how the hospice community will be impacted by the combined 14.3% reductions.

“In the aftermath of health care reform, NHPCO’s Capitol Hill Day 2010 was just the beginning of our efforts to educate Congress on the hospice community’s value and uniqueness as compared with other health care providers. Over 1.4 million patients and families depend on compassionate end-of-life care from hospice programs throughout the country,” said J. Donald Schumacher, NHPCO president and CEO. “It’s important that Congress know the importance of hospice to their constituents so they can take an active role in preserving compassionate end-of-life care for generations to come.”

The mission of Kaua`i Hospice is to ensure the highest quality of life possible for individuals and their families facing a life-threatening illness; to provide bereavement support to individuals, and to promote an understanding of Hospice services. For more information about Kaua`i Hospice and any of our programs, please call 245-7277 or visit our website at www.kauaihospice.org.

NHPCO is the oldest and largest nonprofit, leadership organization representing hospice and palliative care programs and professionals in the United States. NHPCO’s mission is to lead and mobilize social change for improved care at the end of life. To learn more about NHPCO’s Hospice Action Network and the hospice community’s advocacy efforts nationwide, visit www.hospiceactionnetwork.org.

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