

Protecting Patients in Health Care Reform

ASTRO recommends that the following bipartisan principles act as a guidepost for Congress as it considers alternative approaches to provide cancer patients and all Americans with quality care. If your office hosts health care roundtables, consider including a radiation oncologist.



Access

- Maintain bans on pre-existing condition exclusions and annual and lifetime limit caps
- Preserve guaranteed issue and guaranteed renewability
- Access to clinical trials
- Safeguard access to cancer screening and prevention programs



Affordability

- Prohibit cost-shifting to cancer patients and providers to cover uncompensated or underfunded care
- Provide sufficient funds for public health, preventive services, and patient navigator services for cancer patients



Quality and Efficiency

- Simplify burdensome systems to reduce costs, create a more efficient system, and maximize funding for health care services
- Ensure that patient safety and quality programs improve quality and enhance the doctor/patient relationship and are meaningful to patient and physician alike



Network and Benefit Design

- Provide access to specialty care, provider choice, and the range of services that cancer patients need
- Health plans must provide useful, understandable information about health plan options, physician specialist networks, and transparent provider network participation criteria
- Improve the prior authorization process to ensure timely and transparent reviews that don't interfere with evidence-based doctor-patient treatment decisions