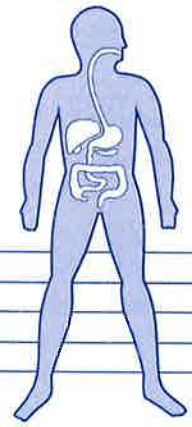


Digestive Disease National Coalition



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Summary Report

DDNC Fall Institutional & Board Member Policy Roundtable October 30, 2018

The Digestive Disease National Coalition (DDNC) hosted its annual Fall Institutional & Board Member Policy Roundtable on Tuesday, October 30, 2018. Representatives from over 30 DDNC constituent and institutional member organizations gathered together at the Johnson & Johnson Washington office for a one-day forum to explore industry and board priorities on patient access that will help to inform the DDNC Policy Agenda.



Dania Palanker (center) from the Center on Health Insurance Reforms presenting at the Fall Roundtable

The roundtable began with presentations from leading health care policy experts, including Dania Palanker, Assistant Research Professor at the Center on Health Insurance Reforms at Georgetown's Health Policy Institute. Dania kicked off the day with an overview of the contemporary health policy landscape heading into the 116th Congress. Her presentation was followed by an analysis of key federal and state access challenges from Steven Newmark, Director of Policy and General Counsel at the Global Healthy Living Foundation. The morning's presentations were closed by Jim Parker, Senior Advisor to Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Alex Azar and Director of the HHS Office of Health Reform, who outlined the administration's efforts to improve patient access to care for chronic disease patients. Time was allotted for questions, and collaborative discussions followed each presentation.

In the afternoon, DDNC institutional member representatives highlighted current and emerging patient access issues that their organizations have observed throughout the country. These presentations prompted a comprehensive dialogue which sought to summarize common goals of each of the organizations assembled and identify promising solutions to access challenges. Through this comprehensive discussion, the group outlined three priorities that will help to advance access to quality and affordable health care for patients with digestive diseases:

1. Patients with chronic conditions have been bombarded by efforts to increase their already prohibitive share of the cost burden for access to quality, affordable care and treatment. DDNC will address these tactics that shift costs onto the patient and unduly increase out-of-pocket spending through a policy statement. This statement will highlight several of these common practices, including step therapy protocols, non-medical switching, and co-pay accumulator adjustment programs.
2. Health literacy and the availability of transparent information on navigating health insurance coverage were also identified as barriers to access for patients with chronic health conditions. DDNC will solicit comprehensible resources from each of its member organizations in this regard and comprise them into a readily accessible format to assist patients with navigating coverage options.
3. DDNC will work to establish a campaign to share these resources with key decision makers and health policy leaders in an effort to improve the public discourse and effect meaningful outcomes on these issues.



Many thanks to the DDNC's Executive Committee, the Board of Directors, and our institutional member representatives for making this year's Policy Roundtable a great success. We hope all DDNC members will join us back in Washington, DC at our Spring Public Policy Forum on March 3rd and 4th, 2019.

HHS Senior Advisor Jim Parker (far left) takes questions from the group on the administration's recent actions on health reform.