

Eli's Hospice Insider

Highlights of the Advance Planning and Compassionate Care Act of 2009

The legislation would infuse funding into research, among other perks.

Hospice and palliative care organizations applaud many of the provisions in the end-of-life bill sponsored by Senators **John D. (Jay) Rockefeller IV** (D-W.Va.) and **Susan Collins** (R-Maine). According to a release from Sen.

Rockefeller's office, some of the provisions in the bill include efforts to:

- Improve provider education and training about advance care planning and end-of-life care. This legislation would establish a National Geriatric and Palliative Care Service Corps modeled after the National Health Service Corps.
- Authorize funding for new and innovative approaches to advance care planning. Grants would be available to states for development of electronic advance directive registries. Grants would also be available to develop systems to identify that a person has an advance directive using driver's licenses, similar to how organ donor status is indicated.
- Provide Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP coverage for advance care planning consultations. This legislation provides Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP coverage for advance care planning so that patients can routinely talk to their physicians about their wishes for end-of-life care.
- Provide concurrent care for children. This legislation requires that concurrent care -- the provision of both curative and hospice care at the same time -- is available to children who qualify for hospice. This will make it possible for children to receive the palliative services they need from hospice while still pursuing potentially curative treatments.
- Require the development of quality measures to assess end-of-life care. The Secretary of Health & Human Services, acting through the director of the Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality, shall require specific end-of-life care quality measures for each relevant provider setting. The legislation would also develop and implement accreditation standards and processes for hospital-based palliative care teams.
- Establish the National Center on Palliative and End-of-Life Care at the NIH. Biomedical and health services research is vital across all phases of life. A new National Center on Palliative and End-of-Life Care at the National Institutes of Health will lead biomedical research on palliative and end-of-life care.