

# NEWS

## Association for Healthcare Philanthropy

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### **HHS Rulemaking on Philanthropic Health Care Support Would Cause Nationwide Closing of Mammography, Hospice and Orthopedics Programs**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**, (February 17, 2000) – A rule change under consideration by the federal Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), which would restrict access to hospital patient databases, would have a devastating effect on health care philanthropy nationwide, according to William C. McGinly, president and CEO of the non-profit Association For Healthcare Philanthropy (AHP).

In a statement issued during a House Ways and Means Health Subcommittee hearing on the HHS rules regarding patient privacy and health information, McGinly said HHS' actions could cost health care programs upwards of \$3.5 billion. HHS' rules would deny access to patient databases used by nonprofit health care providers to receive contributions from grateful patients and their families.

"Nonprofit hospitals work on razor thin budgets already," McGinly said. "If HHS denies us access to patient demographic records, we will be unable to raise funds for nonprofit health care programs from grateful patients -- the life blood of philanthropic gift giving," he said.

"HHS will, in effect, impose mediocrity on the entire American health care system, for as philanthropic support dries up due to lack of access to demographic records, hospitals will be forced to cut back community clinics and hospice programs, reduce new drug discovery programs and purchase of state-of-the-art technology, and eliminate mobile mammography and cancer screening programs," McGinly added.

At the state level alone, AHP estimates that:

Florida would lose \$500,000 in contributions, which would end programs such as Hospice Indigent Care, Companion Aides, and Mobile Care Free Clinics;

California would suffer a decrease in medical funding of 28% with affected programs including Trauma, Cancer and Orthopedics;

Texas would lose \$500,000 in contributions with programs for Prostrate Screening, Shots for Tots Immunization, and Indigent Mammography Programs being eliminated;

Maryland would close some Inpatient Hospice facilities and Community Outpatient Centers which serve 30,000 people without insurance; -more-Massachusetts would lose mobile mammography vans which screen 400 women annually, plus many Free Care Clinics;

Illinois would lose funds for emergency patient/family support and Hospice Services.

On behalf of AHP, McGinly has sent a letter to HHS asking the agency to amend their rulemaking and allow fundraising activities of nonprofits and access to patient information to continue. AHP's letter to HHS is available in the Government Relations section of the AHP website or by telephoning (703) 532-6243. AHP, established in 1967, is a nonprofit organization whose 2,850 members manage philanthropic programs in 1,700 of the nation's 3,400 nonprofit health care providers. AHP members raised more than \$5.7 billion in FY 1998.

AHP, established in 1967, is a not-for-profit organization whose 3,100 members manage philanthropic programs in 1,900 of the nation's 3,400 not-for-profit health care providers. AHP members raised more than \$7 billion in FY 2000.



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