

# Support Access to Respiratory Therapists



## **H.R. 2508 THE BREATHE ACT** Better Respiration through Expanding Access to Tele-Health

### Ask House members to Co-Sponsor the BREATHE Act

**The Better Respiration through Expanding Access to Tele-Health Act (the BREATHE Act), H.R. 2508** will allow qualified respiratory therapists (RTs) as telehealth practitioners to deliver disease management services to Medicare beneficiaries with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).

- » Services would be limited to self-education management and training, demonstration and evaluation of proper inhaler techniques, smoking cessation and remote patient monitoring of respiratory physiologic data.
- » Studies show respiratory therapists can improve outcomes by reducing unnecessary emergency department visits, hospital admissions and hospital readmissions which lead to lower utilization of health care services and lower costs of care.
- » RTs would work under the direct supervision of the physician and the physician would bill Medicare.
- » The bill is a 3-year pilot, with the Secretary required to submit a Report to Congress on the findings no later than one year from the expiration date of the pilot.

**COPD patients involved in studies that included telehealth home monitoring to enhance patient education and self-management skills had improved health outcomes, lower healthcare resource utilization, and decreased healthcare costs.**

Self-management education and training via telehealth can prevent acute exacerbations. The BREATHE Act would allow patients in rural areas and those who are unable to get to their doctor's office to receive care in their home.

- » Respiratory therapists are experts in pulmonary medicine.
- » Respiratory therapists are not currently included as qualified Medicare telehealth practitioners.
- » Recognition by Medicare of respiratory therapists' expertise and skills is long overdue.





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### **THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORT H.R. 2508 THE BREATHE ACT**

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Allergy and Asthma Network  
ALPHA-1 Foundation  
American Association for Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation  
American Association for Homecare  
American Association for Respiratory Care  
American College of Chest Physicians  
American Lung Association  
American Telemedicine Association  
American Thoracic Association  
COPD Foundation  
National Association for Medical Direction of Respiratory Care  
Respiratory Health Association  
Society of Critical Care Medicine  
The FACES Foundation  
The Dorney-Koppel Foundation  
U.S. COPD Coalition

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#### **About AARC:**

**With 47,000 members, the AARC is the leading national and international professional association for respiratory care.** It encourages and promotes professional excellence, advances the science and practice of respiratory care, and serves as an advocate for patients, their families, the public, the profession, and the respiratory therapist.

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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