



AMERICAN
SPEECH-LANGUAGE-
HEARING
ASSOCIATION

January 20, 2009

Coalition for Patients' Rights
c/o American Nurses Association
8515 Georgia Avenue, Suite 400
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3492

To Whom It May Concern:

The American-Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) supports the mission of the Coalition for Patients' Rights (CPR) to ensure that the growing needs of the American health system can be met and that patients have access to quality health care providers of their choice. ASHA is the professional, credentialing and scientific organization that represents more than 130,000 audiologists, speech-language pathologists, and speech, language and hearing scientists, approximately 40 % of which work in health related settings.

The CPR member organizations are united in their opposition to the American Medical Association's (AMA) Scope of Practice Partnership that would not only limit patient access to services, but narrow the scope of practice for the professional organizations represented. Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) and audiologists are uniquely qualified to provide speech language and hearing diagnostic and intervention services for infants through the elderly by virtue of their rigorous academic training and credentialing and licensing requirements.

Without the contributions of SLPs and audiologists many patients across the country would not have access to the services they need and with the cost of health care continually rising, additional barriers, especially those in rural and medically underserved areas, would be detrimental to patient health.

ASHA looks forward to its continued involvement on the steering committee of the CPR and will continue to support efforts to ensure that access to appropriate health care services is achievable for all. Please feel free to contact Janet Deppe, ASHA's Director of State Advocacy at jdeppe@asha.org, should you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,

Arlene Pietranton, PhD, CAE
Executive Director

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