

### **We did it! White House petition reaches 25,000 signatures**

Members of the Academy responded across the US to reach the required number of signatures for the White House petition asking the President to urge the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to reconsider its decision to excluded dietitians as billable providers for intensive behavioral therapy for obesity. Thank you for promoting this effort within your membership. We could not have achieved our goal without your support.

### ***What happens now?***

The Academy has already begun to prepare for the next step which could include communication or a meeting with the Obama Administration. Now that the petition has reached the signatures threshold, the Administration will contact the Government Relations team in the Academy's Washington, D.C. office. In addition, the Academy is working with members of Congress to also urge CMS to reconsider its decision.

### ***What can you do?***

We need you to lead by example and encourage our constituents to keep the momentum moving!

**First:** If you haven't sent a letter to your members of Congress, please take action today! Overall less than 2% of Academy members have done so (see attached document with state-by-state breakdown). Visit the Academy's Grassroots Manager at: <http://www.eatright.org/members/actioncenter.aspx> to send your letters and share this link again with your members. It only takes a few minutes and will ensure our voices are heard in Congress.

**Next:** Every member should be considering their next steps as outlined by Academy President Sylvia Escott-Stump in her [message](#) on December 8, 2011. On a continuous basis, strive to:

- Participate in activities that document the RDs worth.
- Start in your own backyard - does your personal health insurance include coverage for RD services?
- Become a Medicare provider for Part B MNT services. We need to demonstrate that we have the providers to meet demand. <http://www.cms.gov/cmsforms/downloads/cms855i.pdf>
- Form relationships with Primary Care Practitioners to provide nutrition counseling services in medical practices.
- Market your services to the healthcare community and other community groups.
- Work with your DPGs and Affiliate Public Policy Panels - provide your expert input when issues arise.
- Attend the Public Policy Workshop. PPW 2012 is scheduled for April 5-17 in Washington, D.C. <http://www.eatright.org/ppw/>
- Donate to the Academy Political Action Committee. The PAC is our way as a profession to support federal elected officials who are supportive of our causes. <https://eweb.eatright.org/eweb/DynamicPage.aspx?webcode=pacdonationslist&site=pac>
- Vote in national and local elections.
- Be a preceptor for dietetic students - we need to build the RD and DTR workforce.
- Keep our voice strong and united-get involved in legislative and regulatory issues affecting food, nutrition and dietetics.

Watch for further updates on the Academy's efforts to address this situation.