

# IMPACT NEWSLETTER

## PARTNERING WITH POLICY MAKERS TO IMPROVE TRANSITIONS

by Venn Strategies, LLC



**N**TOCC has been diligently working to ensure that improving transitions of care remains a priority for the Administration and Congress, particularly as the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* is implemented.

In April, Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced the “*Community-Based Care Transitions Program*,” which was authorized by the Affordable Care Act and will provide \$500 million to eligible hospitals and community-based organizations for care transition services. Another \$500 million will be made available for demonstration projects related to reducing hospital-acquired conditions through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation Center. For more information on the Community Based Care Transitions Program, click [here](#).

Following a meeting between NTOCC and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in February, CMS included a link to NTOCC’s recently released “*Transitions of Care Compendium*” on their Community Based Care Transitions’ website. CMS officials noted that the Compendium is “an excellent resource for potential applicants to our program,” —a strong signal that NTOCC’s efforts have clearly not gone unnoticed by CMS. The link to NTOCC’s compendium was an exciting development for our organization

as it demonstrates the value of NTOCC’s tools and resources for policy makers.

In early May, The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee held a hearing titled, “*First, Do No Harm: Improving Health Quality and Patient Safety*.” Dr. Carolyn Clancy, Director for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) was the hearing’s lead witness. NTOCC submitted a statement for the record to thank the Committee for holding the hearing and emphasized that, as policy makers and health care providers strive to improve health care quality and patient safety, it is essential that the improvement of care transitions in our health care system is made a top priority.

The statement also mentioned NTOCC’s support of the Health and Human Services (HHS) recently announced “*Partnership for Patients*” initiative, which identifies effective care transitions as a key component of improving the quality, safety, and affordability of health care for all Americans. Finally, the statement urged Congress to support the Community-Based Care Transition Program and to keep in mind NTOCC’s [seven key considerations](#) as new policies and programs emerge that seek to improve care transitions.

*Venn Strategies, LLC is an NTOCC member and nationally recognized, full-service government relations and public affairs firm.*



### Dear NTOCC Coalition Member:

NTOCC is working to improve transitions through public policy, education and awareness, tools and resources, measures

outcomes, and health information technology.

NTOCC’s online community of subscribers and associate members has grown to over 3,000 individuals, and many of you have asked, “How can we have greater participation?”

Over the next few months, NTOCC will develop membership and sponsorship opportunities for those wanting to work on building stronger collaboration and consensus on how to improve and change the way we coordinate care through transitions.

We will keep you informed through our newsletter and online notices about the opportunities. I want to thank each of you for your continued support and interest in the National Transitions of Care Coalition.

Best Wishes,

Cheri Lattimer, RN, BSN  
NTOCC Director, CMSA Executive Director

## Advisory Task Force Meeting Update

On May 11, the NTOCC Advisory Task Force held its first meeting of 2011 in Washington, D.C.

We were extremely fortunate to be joined by several members of the Administration who provided the group with insights into the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, specifically, the initiatives aimed at improving care coordination and transitions.

The day opened with keynote speaker — Dr. James Hester, Senior Advisor at the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI). Dr. Hester outlined the purpose of CMMI, as well as specific initiatives underway to develop new models that make it easier for doctors and clinicians in different settings to work together to care for beneficiaries.

Following Dr. Hester’s remarks, the group heard from a panel of CMS policy experts, including Juliana R. Tiongson, Lead Analyst, Care Transitions Program; Traci Archibald, Care Transitions Theme Specialist, Office

of Clinical Standards and Quality; and Elizabeth November, Health Insurance Specialist, Performance Based Payment Policy Staff.

The panelists spoke on issues including the Community-Based Care Transitions Program and Medicare Shared Savings Program.

The highlight of the event was lunch keynote speaker, Dr. Carolyn Clancy, Director, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).

Dr. Clancy outlined AHRQ’s priorities regarding transitions of care, current work on patient-centered outcomes research, and the status of health care information technology.

The entire event was extremely successful and both the speakers and panelists thanked NTOCC for our work and discussed how we can partner together in the future to improve health care quality through effective transitions of care.

# NTOCC Posts a New Resource



Patient and family caregivers are often unsure how to communicate with providers or what they should expect.

The National Transitions of Care Coalition just released ***Your Rights During Transitions of Care: A Guide for Health Care Consumers and Family Care Givers.***

This guide will assist patients and family care givers in getting the information and services they need. Included are topics such as, *"You have the right to be treated fairly and with respect during care transitions."*

Providers can print the guide directly from the NTOCC website to provide to patients and their family care givers. Consumers may also access the guide and download the information.

The Guide is provided in two forms: A short summary format and a longer version providing expanded explanation of each statement.

Health care professionals can download the NTOCC Guide at: [http://www.ntocc.org/Home/HealthCareProfessionals/WWS\\_HCP\\_Tools.aspx](http://www.ntocc.org/Home/HealthCareProfessionals/WWS_HCP_Tools.aspx)

# NTOCC Compendium Featured on CMS' Community Based Care Transitions Website

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' Community Based Care Transitions website now includes a link to NTOCC's recently released, ***"Transitions of Care Compendium."***

Since the Compendium's release in late February, NTOCC has received many emails identifying it as "an excellent resource for providers wanting information on transitions of care."

The Compendium is an online collection of white papers, journal articles, websites, forms and other care-transitions resources accessible in an easy-to-use format designed to provide users with a convenient, centralized location to preview materials that will help them improve care transitions.

Also included is the newly developed tool — ***"Care Transition Bundle — 7 Essential Interventions Categories & Crosswalk."***

The NTOCC Compendium can be found on the website at [www.ntocc.org/compendium](http://www.ntocc.org/compendium).



## About the National Transitions of Care Coalition

The National Transitions of Care Coalition (NTOCC) was formed in 2006 bringing together thought leaders, patient advocates, and health care providers from various care settings dedicated to improving the quality of care coordination and communication when patients are transferred from one level of care to another. Transitions in care include a patient moving from primary care to specialty physicians; within the hospital it would include patients moving from the emergency department to various departments, such as surgery or intensive care; or when patients are discharged from the hospital and go home, into an

*NTOCC is chaired and coordinated by CMSA in partnership with sanofi-aventis U.S.*

assisted living arrangements or into a skilled nursing facility. NTOCC is comprised of a diverse group of national associations and organizations addressing the critical issues surrounding transitions of care. NTOCC views transitions of care as a major challenge to health care delivery and realizes it can only be solved by breaking down the silos and barriers between different health care settings and working collaboratively for the good of the patient. Whether you are a patient, care giver, health care professional, policy maker or media representative, NTOCC can provide you with information and tools to better understand, and improve, transitions of care challenges.