



## NCCAOM Advocacy Update – May 2022

By Molly Giammarco, Senior Manager, Policy & Government Relations



### Advocacy News

#### Support for H.R. 4803

[H.R. 4803, the Acupuncture for Our Seniors Act](#) is now bipartisan! Thanks for the work of the [NCCAOM and ASA advocacy team](#), U.S. Representative Brian Fitzpatrick (R-Pennsylvania) became the first Republican to co-sponsor H.R. 4803. Bipartisan support is critical to advancing legislation through Congress. Democratic and Republican support shows that Medicare recognition for acupuncturists is not a partisan issue, but is instead about expanding access to evidence-based care.

Since its introduction in late July 2021, the NCCAOM has worked with the ASA to help increase awareness of, and support for, H.R. 4803 with the following initiatives:

- **Constituent Meetings:** The NCCAOM/ASA Advocacy team continue to schedule Congressional meetings with acupuncturists in Republican House Districts. If you receive an email about a meeting opportunity, say yes! You do not need policy experience—you simply need to share how H.R. 4803 affects your practice and your patients. You will receive training before the meeting and have everything you need to from the NCCAOM and the ASA. Hill meetings are a great way to help the NCCAOM and the ASA advance H.R. 4803!
- **Advocacy at Your Fingertips:** Through the NCCAOM/ASA grassroots platform, H.R. 4803 supporters can email and tweet their U.S. Representatives about this important bill by texting any of the following words to: **52886**
  - Acupuncture (Acupuncturists)
  - Student (Acupuncture Students)



- Acupuncture Patient (Patients)
- Senior Citizen (Seniors)
- Acupuncture Ally (General supporters)
- ***The Patient Testimonial Portal:*** Patients’ voices are a key part of advancing H.R. 4803. The NCCAOM/ASA Patient Testimonial Portal enables patients to tell Congress how acupuncture has helped them. [The Patient Testimonial Portal](#) information is available in English and Chinese and provides guidance on talking with your patients about this opportunity, privacy compliance, and instructions for collecting and submitting patient testimonials.
- ***The NCCAOM/ASA H.R. 4803 Fact Sheet:*** This resource (in English and Chinese) provides information about the bill for all audiences.
- ***Acupuncture Today Contributions:*** Each edition of Acupuncture Today features a column from the NCCAOM/ASA advocacy team and ASA/NCCAOM advocates about H.R. 4803, Medicare recognition, and the ways acupuncturists and allies can support this effort.
- ***Town Halls:*** The NCCAOM and ASA invite members of the profession to their town halls (held so far this year in February and April) for updates on H.R. 4803 and information about ways individuals can get involved as advocates.

The NCCAOM and the ASA are working together to continue to equip the profession with the resources to advance H.R. 4803. Look for more information on the many different ways you can get involved in the NCCAOM/ASA’s grassroots efforts.

### **Medicare-Recognition (H.R. 4803) Background**

Obtaining provider status under Medicare would enable acupuncturists to directly bill Medicare for the covered services that they provide to Medicare beneficiaries (generally those 65 and older). This recognition is critical to advancing the acupuncturist profession as it would grant more individuals access to qualified acupuncturists—and more qualified acupuncturists access to more populations. Medicare recognition would also help the profession collect and generate data on the acupuncture benefits, particularly with regard to quality and cost.



*As many of you know, CMS covers acupuncture services for chronic lower back pain (CLBP), but does not recognize acupuncturists as providers. This lack of recognition prevents a significant number of the profession from readily providing CLBP services to Medicare beneficiaries. The resulting barrier prevents those with the most expertise and training in acupuncture from providing these services.*

*The NCCAOM and ASA continue to maintain a series of resources to help educate the profession on Medicare recognition and the [steps required for Medicare provider status](#). Read more about how Medicare provider status would affect the profession by visiting the [NCCAOM's Advocacy Page](#).*

*Stay tuned for more updates on next steps for obtaining Medicare recognition. Contact the NCCAOM Advocacy team with any Medicare-related questions at [advocacy@thenccaom.org](mailto:advocacy@thenccaom.org).*

### **NCCAOM Regulatory Comments**

#### **PCORI Proposed Research Agenda**

*In January 2022, the NCCAOM worked with the ASA to [respond to the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute's \(PCORI\) proposed Research Agenda](#). The response emphasized the importance of more acupuncture-led research to enhance existing literature, increase acupuncture's evidence base, and reduce healthcare disparities. PCORI finalized its [Research Agenda](#) in March 2022.*

#### **PCORI Background**

*To help provide more evidence-based information pertinent to patients and families, the U.S. Congress established PCORI in 2010 to help generate data patient-centered data. PCORI is an independent nonprofit, nongovernmental organization in Washington, D.C. and seeks to identify and close research gaps.*

#### **CDC Clinical Practice Guideline for Prescribing Opioids**

*In April 2022, the NCCAOM and the ASA joined efforts to respond to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) request for feedback on its proposed revision to its guidance for prescribing opioids. The [NCCAOM/ASA comments](#) centered on the role CDC*



*has in using existing evidence to guide practitioners, hospitals, and patients toward non-opioid therapies for pain management.*

*The NCCAOM Advocacy Represents You*

*The NCCAOM advocacy team works tirelessly to advocate for its diplomates—you. If there is an issue, challenge, or opportunity you would like to convey to the team, please do not hesitate to reach out!*

*Read more about the NCCAOM's advocacy efforts at the [NCCAOM Advocacy Page](#). Please contact the [NCCAOM Advocacy team](#) with any questions regarding the NCCAOM's Advocacy efforts and ways to get involved.*

*The NCCAOM Advocacy Team*