



## HEALTH CARE ALLIANCE FOR PATIENT SAFETY

### **Alliance for Patient Safety champions advocate for patient safety in Washington, D.C.**

*Alliance champions met with White House, Members of Congress and Congressional staff*

(ALRINGTON, Va.) - The Health Care Alliance for Patient Safety (Alliance) this week held its “Day on the Hill,” with vision doctors from across the United States sharing insights and data with policy makers.

Esteemed doctors of optometry representing the Alliance met with White House officials, Members of Congress, Congressional staff and health regulators, discussing the importance of maintaining a strong doctor-patient relationship, the necessity of safe, healthy and effective use of medical devices, protecting prescription integrity and regulatory enforcement.

Dr. Jim DeVleming and Dr. Jacquie Bowen met with White House staff to both President Donald J. Trump and Vice President Michael R. Pence, briefing them on the Alliance’s legislative and regulatory priorities.

As some Alliance leaders were at the White House, others went to Capitol Hill to meet with Members of Congress. Following meetings with individual Members, Alliance Chair Deanna Alexander, O.D., moderated an informative panel at the Rayburn House Office Building. The panel included Michele L. Andrews, O.D., CooperVision; Carol L. Alexander, O.D, Johnson & Johnson Vision Care; and the immediate Past-President of Contact Lens & Cornea Section of the American Optometric Association, Jeffrey Sonsino, O.D.

The panel called attention to the proposed Contact Lens Rule, which is currently under consideration by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). Attendees were surprised to learn of how some online retailers bend current rules.

The panel explored the need to reform rules surrounding the prescription verification process, illustrating how rules are bent by playing a recording of a robocall from Jan. 1, 2018 – a national holiday in which most businesses are closed. This recording demonstrates retailers using computer-generated recordings that lack basic, necessary information like a patient's name, to verify prescriptions.

As the panel pointed out, it is impossible to verify a prescription if a vision doctor is not given the name of the individual to crosscheck the prescription details. In addition, the robocall audio is nearly unintelligible even when listening intently for content. The robocall can be downloaded here: <http://bit.ly/2KewJxQ>

The panel also shared [an informational video produced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), which highlights the importance of proper contact lens care. In the CDC's video, a University of Alabama football player shares his story about how improper care led to Acanthamoeba keratitis, an infection of the eye. This condition has caused permanent vision loss for the patient and will require him to have a major eye procedure in an effort to restore vision.

The "Day on the Hill" and Congressional briefing concluded with panelists and Alliance champions urging attendees to encourage the FTC to consider these and other examples when finalizing the Contact Lens Rule. Following the briefing, panelists took questions from Congressional staffers.

Interested parties can access photos of Alliance champions advocating for patient safety here: <http://bit.ly/2HxNaDM>. Photo credit can be attributed to the Health Care Alliance for Patient Safety