

## **Guarding Heart Angels- Protecting the Quality In Heart Care**

The Guarding Hearts Alliance is a group of more than 23000 cardiologists dedicated to preserve and protect the highest quality cardiac care available in America. This group strongly favors Medicare regulations and health care reform initiatives that put patient first in preserving access to quality cardiac care.

Cardiovascular disease takes lives of more American compared to cancer, accidents and diabetes combines. It is considered as Number One Killer in America, claiming 2,400 lives each day. "That number will continue to climb if currently proposed Medicare regulations or certain provisions within health care reform legislation are implemented," said Warren Levy, M.D., F.A.C.C., a Virginia-based cardiologist and a spokesperson for the alliance. "We are launching the Guarding Hearts Alliance to make sure that America's heart patients are heard in Washington. We support the intention of recently proposed Medicare regulations, but we cannot stand by as proposals are adopted that will hurt patients and their access to the highest quality cardiac care possible. Our focus is on our patients and protecting the progress we've made in fighting heart disease."

The group's mission is to educate lawmakers and others about how proposed Medicare's regulations and health care reforms. Administered through the Cardiology Advocacy Alliance, this group is vitally concerned about potential changes that could inadvertently endanger patient lives. Issues such as imaging equipment utilization rates and reimbursement fee schedules might sound like they would generate simple shifts in business practices, but they represent a real threat – restricting access to lifesaving technology that serves the range of rural Medicare recipients to privately insured urban residents alike.

Guarding Hearts Alliance wants Medicare Officials and Congress to consider following measures under this reform:

- Support strong credentialing and accreditation programs to make certain that diagnostic equipment is used properly and cost-effectively.
- Encourage the use of criteria to help physicians determine which tests are appropriate based on a patient's symptoms and medical history.
- Provide for disclosure of physician ownership in hospitals and imaging equipment to promote transparency.
- Ensure patient safety through the creation of emergency care provisions and protocols at physician-owned facilities.

Guarding Hearts Alliance support Medicare Regulations and health care legislation that put the patient first i.e. making sure cardiac patients have access to the tests their doctors use to diagnose and treat their heart disease.

emPower pledges its support to Guarding Hearts Alliance in an effort to protect access to Quality Cardiac Care for all Americans.

### **About empower**

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