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MEMORANDUM

TO: All Members

FROM: Patrick Cucinelli, Senior Director of Public Policy Solutions

DATE: July 8, 2010

SUBJECT: **New CMS Administrator**

ROUTE TO: Administrator, Director

ABSTRACT: President appoints Dr. Donald Berwick as CMS administrator.

President Obama has appointed [Dr. Donald Berwick](#) administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), which has been led by acting administrators since October 2006. Part of the reason for President Obama's delay in appointing an administrator has been the desire to make a "recess appointment," which, at least temporarily, circumvents the Senate confirmation process.

Recess appointments were originally intended to allow presidents to fill critical positions on a temporary basis, while Congress is out of session. As of late, presidents are more often using the process to avoid contentious confirmation battles. The current appointment of Dr. Berwick remains in place through the end of 2011. The general consensus is that Senate Republicans would have used the confirmation process as a referendum on the recently passed [Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010](#) (aka the Health Care Reform Act.) There were threats on the part of some senators to stall the confirmation process indefinitely.

Dr. Berwick, a pediatrician by training, brings an extensive resume in health policy to his new position, having most recently served as the president and CEO of the [Institute for Healthcare Improvement](#), clinical professor of pediatrics and health care policy at the Harvard Medical School and professor of health policy and management at the Harvard School of Public Health.

Dr. Berwick will assume his new role at a critical time for CMS. Under his leadership, many policy and operational decisions will be made that will influence the implementation of the

Health Care Reform Act for years to come. Please see attached for a copy of the official White House press release on Dr. Berwick's appointment.

Please contact me with any questions at pcucinelli@nyahsa.org or call 518-449-2707 ext. 145.

Attachment

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