

## **The 2012 Elections: Questions for Candidates**

**The approaching elections** are an opportunity to raise important questions and look for answers from those seeking our support. Questions such as:

- Do you believe Medicare and Medicaid payments to hospitals will need to be reduced during the next session of Congress?
- How will you ensure that your constituents have access to hospital services?
- How do you think Medicare and Medicaid should be changed to ensure the future of these programs?

**Hospital leaders have the opportunity... and the responsibility...** to engage in a dialogue with candidates for federal office and seek their opinions.

The following questions are intended to help you start an important discussion with your candidates for federal office and elected officials. Use these questions to begin an ongoing dialogue with your Member of the House and Senate or candidates for those positions. They are only months away from engaging in a legislative debate that will impact your hospital and community.

**Share these as you see fit** with your board members, employees and other friends of the hospital for their use in candidate forums and other meetings.

**Please feel free to contact the AHA** at **1-800-424-4301** or **wecarewewote@aha.org** for assistance in reaching out to candidates for office.



- The partisan rhetoric on Capitol Hill continues to escalate as the parties appear unable to work together to pass legislation in a bipartisan manner.

**Do you believe there is hope for the parties to work together to debate issues and devise solutions? Where would you start?**

- Hospitals are now more than buildings offering inpatient services. Not only do hospitals manage needed emergency departments and trauma centers, they are often gateways to care in many different settings. Adequate support from the Medicare and Medicaid programs is essential if hospitals are to continue offering the array of services their communities have come to expect and depend on.

**Do you believe Medicare and Medicaid payments to providers will need to be reduced during the next session of Congress?**

- The expansions in Medicaid coverage included in the Affordable Care Act were partially offset through reductions in other spending that impact hospitals.

**Do you think those spending reductions should be lowered in light of the Supreme Court's decision?**

- The baby boom generation is just now becoming eligible for the Medicare program. At same time, new technologies and treatments are offering the chance to improve and extend lives. But, they are expensive.

**Do you think individuals should be asked to contribute in additional ways to efforts to sustain the future of the Medicare program?**

- The health care system operates within one of the most complex webs of government regulation. A variety of federal regulations inhibit efforts to deliver services in the most efficient manner possible. Many elected officials have pledged to do away with "burdensome and costly regulations."

**Will you work with your health providers to create a specific list of regulations that should be withdrawn?**



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**[wecarewewote@aha.org](mailto:wecarewewote@aha.org)**



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