



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies


Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Advocacy in Motion: How to Coordinate In-District Advocacy Events

Speakers:

Kelly M. Cooney M.A., CCC-SLP, NARA President
Sabrena McCarley, MBA-SL, OTR/L, CLIPP, RAC-CTA, QCP, FAOTA/NARA Chair Government Affairs Committee
Lisa Chambers, MS, CCC/SLP, CHC/NARA Government Affairs Committee Member
Kathleen Dwyer, OTR/L, CHT, RAC-CT, CHC/NARA Government Affairs Committee Member

1



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Housekeeping Reminders

- All attendees are on mute
- Handouts were provided in the reminder email for this webinar sent 1 hour ago
- **Questions for Speakers:** submit them using the Q&A button on the attendee control panel
- **Technical Questions:** submit them using the Chat button on the attendee control panel
- **Recording:** will be posted for NARA Members on the Portal within 24 hours

2



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Disclaimer

The information shared in today's presentation is shared in good faith and for general information purposes only. It is accurate as of the date and time of this presentation.



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org





NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Advocacy

- Merriam-Webster dictionary defines advocacy as *The act or process of supporting a cause or proposal: the act or process of advocating.*
- You are a subject matter expert when it comes to talking about and advocating for your profession, your industry/your practice setting and most importantly your patients.
 - Elected officials work for their constituents and it is imperative that they hear from those that they are elected to represent on issues such as access to care and reimbursement challenges and much more.

5



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Getting to know the 3 types of advocacy:

- **Self-advocacy:**
 - *speaking for yourself and knowing what is important to you.*
- **Individual advocacy:**
 - *when a person or group of people/an organization focuses on the interests of one or a few individuals. Individual advocacy can be either informal or formal.*
- **Systems advocacy:**
 - *focuses on change at the local, state, and national levels to impact change within public policy.*

6



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

6 principles of advocacy:

- 1. Honesty:**
 - *implies a refusal to lie, steal, or deceive in any way.*
- 2. Fairness:**
 - *the quality or state of being fair.*
- 3. Respect:**
 - *a relation or reference to a particular thing or situation.*
- 4. Compassion:**
 - *sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it.*
- 5. Integrity:**
 - *firm adherence to a code of especially moral or artistic values.*
- 6. Self-Discipline:**
 - *correction or regulation of oneself for the sake of improvement.*

7



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Coordinating In-District Advocacy Initiatives



8



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Guide to Coordinating In-District Advocacy Initiatives

1. Establish a Lead Person and Planning Committee
2. Define Your Objective
3. Identify Key Facilities
4. Locating Your Elected Representatives and Senators

9



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Establish a Lead Person and Planning Committee

These individuals play a very active role in coordinating in-district legislative events

10



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Establish a Lead Person and Planning Committee

- Need to designate a lead person in your organization that will work in conjunction with the rehab team as well as the customer to plan the event and who will establish a planning committee to assist with the event.
- Legislative visits should be scheduled at least one month in advance for a successful event.

11



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Define Your Objective

12



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Define Your Objective

- **Advocacy Goal:** What issue(s) are you addressing (e.g., state vs. federal issue(s), reimbursement, access to care, healthcare policy)?
 - NARA Advocacy Resources: Review the Advocacy Center under the Advocacy Tab and the Legislative Tracking under the Advocacy Tab for the latest key legislative bills.
 - Lobbying Firm: If your organization works with a lobbying firm, it is recommended that you schedule a call with your lobbyists to review legislative priorities.
 - State Associations: Review legislative priorities.

13



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Define Your Objective

- **Facility Type:** Are you focusing on skilled nursing facilities, hospitals, out patient therapy clinics, pediatric clinics, rural vs. urban facility?
 - **Lobbying Firm:** If your organization works with a lobbying firm it is recommended that you schedule a call with your lobbyists to review your facility locations and the elected official(s) in those areas. This will allow you the opportunity to prioritize facilities and elected officials. Additionally, it will allow you the opportunity to discuss the best time for planning the in-district advocacy events at your facilities based upon information that they have on when elected officials are in their districts and available for a facility visit/tour/meeting.

14



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Identify Key Facilities

Everyone needs to be in agreement

15



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Identify Key Facilities

- **Alignment with Mission:** Choose facilities that align with your objective (e.g. dementia care, high managed care, high Medicaid, mental health facility).
- **Geography:** Select facilities in key geographical locations such as those with underserved populations, facilities with diverse residents or those in urban or rural areas.
- **Reputation/Impact:** Consider facilities reputation in the community, community involvement, 5-star rating, tour readiness, services provided (e.g. dementia care, trach/vents, behavioral health).

16




NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

LOCATING YOUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATORS



17



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Locating Your Elected Representatives and Senators

Congress.gov allows you to locate your elected Representatives and Senators

1. Go to: <https://www.congress.gov/members/find-your-member>
2. Input your zip code to find your elected Representatives and Senators *(you can also input the zip code of your healthcare facility or clinic)*

Find Your Members


Find your member by address:

Find address or place

Already know your member? Find your member on a list to view their contact information.

[Representatives >>](#) [Senators >>](#)

18



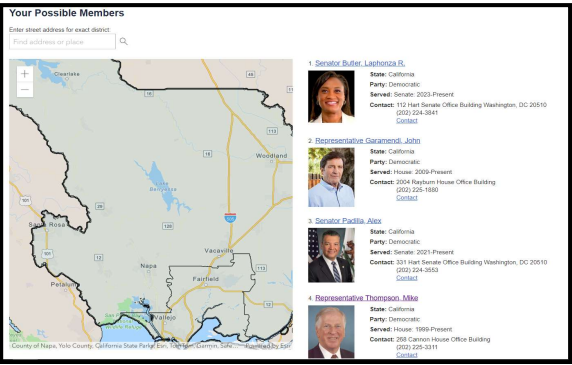
NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org


Locating Your Elected Representatives and Senators

3. A list of your possible members will generate.

- You can also enter your street address for an exact district.



19

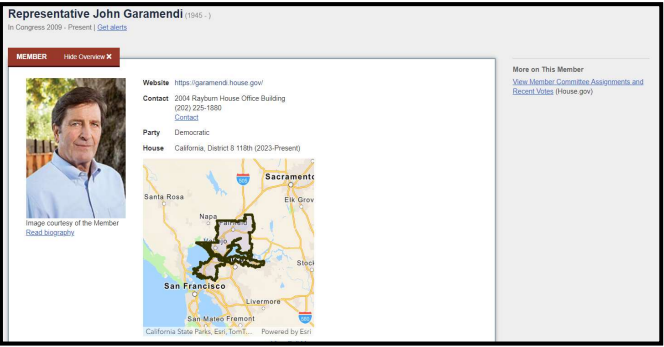


NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies


Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Locating Your Elected Representatives and Senators

4. Click on a member's name and it will take you to their information page.




20

 **NARA**
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Locating Your Elected Representatives and Senators

5. Click on the website link
– *(it is important to note that not all websites are designed the same)*



21


 **NARA**
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

SCHEDULING MEETINGS OUTSIDE OF CONFERENCE



22




NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Scheduling Meetings

- Each legislator has a website with a direct link to schedule a meeting and to invite them to an event (such as inviting them to your facility)
 - *You can request a meeting with legislators who represent the district that you live in or who represents the district that you have business in*

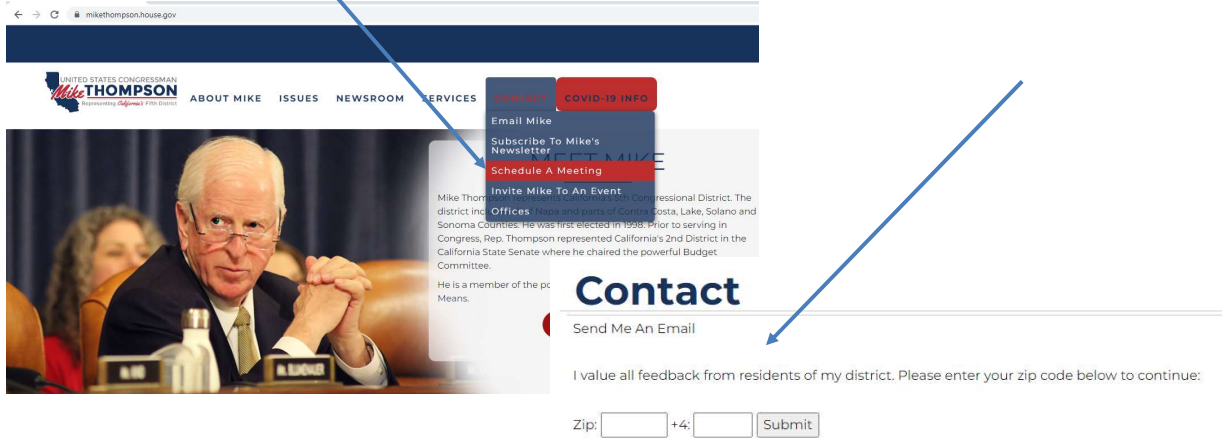
23



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Scheduling Meetings



UNITED STATES CONGRESSMAN
Mike THOMPSON
Representing California's 11th District

ABOUT MIKE | ISSUES | NEWSROOM | SERVICES

Contact | COVID-19 INFO

Email Mike

Subscribe To Mike's Newsletter

Schedule A Meeting

Invite Mike To An Event

Mike Thompson represents California's 11th Congressional District. The district includes Contra Costa, Colusa, Lake, Solano and Sonoma Counties. He was first elected in 1998. Prior to serving in Congress, Rep. Thompson represented California's 2nd District in the California State Senate where he chaired the powerful Budget Committee.

He is a member of the pro-life caucus.


Contact

Send Me An Email

I value all feedback from residents of my district. Please enter your zip code below to continue:

Zip: +4:

24



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Scheduling Meetings

Write Your Rep

Write Your Representative

Required fields are followed by *.

Your Information

Prefix *
[M.]

First Name *


Last Name *

Street Address *

City *

State *
[CA]

Zip *



UNITED STATES CONGRESSMAN
Mike THOMPSON
Representing California's Fifth District

Email Information

Email *

Yes, I would like to subscribe to your newsletter

Your Message

Yes, I would like a response.

No, I just want you to know my thoughts

Select the issue your email relates to:

- Budget and Public Finance
- Communications and Technology
- Defense
- Disaster Relief
- Education
- Energy and Environment
- Foreign Affairs
- Government Oversight and Reform
- Gun Violence Prevention
- Health**
- Housing
- Immigration
- Jobs and Economy
- Judiciary
- Other
- Postal Issues
- Science and Space
- Social Security and Pensions
- Taxes
- Trade
- None

Subject *

Comment *

Utilize the comment box to request specific date(s) and time(s) for a meeting and provide specific information about why you are requesting a meeting.

25



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

INVITING ELECTED OFFICIALS TO YOUR FACILITY OR CLINIC



26

NARA
The National Association of Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Invite To An Event

UNITED STATES CONGRESSMAN
Mike THOMPSON
Representing California's Fifth District

ABOUT MIKE ISSUES NEWSROOM SERVICES CONTACT

Event Request

Complete and submit this form to request my appearance at a speaking or non-speaking function. Due to scheduling demands, not all requests may be filled.

***Please note due to current public health concerns surrounding the coronavirus, Congressman Thompson and his staff are conducting "no contact" meetings. In an abundance of caution, we are also asking people to stay home if they are sick. If you are sick and it's an urgent matter, we are happy to schedule a phone meeting.*

Required fields are followed by *.

Your Contact Information

Prefix

First Name *

Last Name *

Suffix

Email Address *

CONTACT

- Email Mike
- Subscribe to Mike's Newsletter
- Schedule a Meeting
- Invite Mike to an Event
- Offices

REP. SCOTT PETERSON
San Diego | Coronado | Poway

ABOUT CONTACT HELPING YOU MEDIA CENTER LEGISLATION

- Email Me
- Stay Updated
- Offices
- Invite Me To Speak
- Request A Meeting
- Website Problem

If an option, you can utilize the comment box to request specific date(s) and time(s) for a facility visit and to provide specific information about your facility and why you are requesting a visit.

27

NARA
The National Association of Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

ONE-MONTH PLANNING GUIDE

28



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Planning For Your Visits

Week 1: Initial Planning & Contact

- Identify the Elected Official:
 - Research the appropriate local, state, or federal elected official. Focus on those who have influence over healthcare, senior care, or skilled nursing issues (e.g., a state senator or congressperson).
 - Review the official's voting record, committees, or policies related to healthcare or long-term care.
- Prepare Materials for Contact:
 - Develop a clear, concise invitation letter or email explaining the purpose of the visit, why it's important for the elected official to attend, and the key issues to discuss (e.g., Medicare reimbursement rates, staffing challenges, or regulatory burdens).
 - Prepare a brief fact sheet about the skilled nursing facility, including demographics, types of care provided, and relevant data (e.g., number of residents served, success stories, outcomes).
- Contact the Official's Office:
 - Reach out via phone and/or email to the official's staff to express interest in scheduling the visit.
 - Be flexible with potential dates and offer a range of time slots (typically one to two weeks in the future).
 - Mention if media will be present and outline potential photo opportunities, which might increase the likelihood of acceptance.
- Coordinate with Facility Leadership:
 - Discuss the idea with the facility's leadership and staff to ensure full support.
 - Identify potential speakers (e.g., administrators, healthcare staff, or residents) who can present their perspectives during the visit.

29



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Planning For Your Visits

Week 2: Follow-Up & Detailed Preparation

- Follow Up with the Official's Office:
 - If you haven't received a response, follow up with the official's staff to confirm interest and discuss logistics.
 - Work to lock in a date by the end of this week.
- Internal Planning Meeting:
 - Host a meeting with facility staff to go over details of the visit. Determine the key points to communicate to the official (e.g., funding challenges, patient outcomes, or workforce shortages).
 - Draft talking points for the facility's leadership and staff.
 - Identify specific residents or family members who might want to share their experiences (if appropriate and with consent).
- Prepare an Agenda:
 - Draft a proposed agenda for the visit, ensuring time for introductions, a tour of the facility, discussions with staff and residents, and a debriefing session.
 - Include a Q&A session where the elected official can ask questions about the facility's services and challenges.

30



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Planning For Your Visits

Week 3: Final Preparations

- **Confirm Visit Details:**
 - Confirm the date, time, and agenda with the elected official's office. Ensure they are aware of any potential media presence or photo ops.
 - Finalize internal scheduling and notify all key participants (staff, residents, and families) about the visit.
- **Prepare Materials:**
 - Create a folder or packet of materials for the official that includes the facility's fact sheet, relevant legislative talking points, and any other information you want to highlight during the visit.
 - Make sure these materials are professionally printed and easy to read.
- **Media Coordination:**
 - If you plan to invite local media, send out a media advisory to let them know about the event and its significance. Coordinate with the official's office regarding media participation to avoid conflicts.
- **Conduct a Dry Run:**
 - Hold a brief walk-through of the visit with key participants. Go over talking points, review the flow of the tour, and prepare for the official's potential questions.

31



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Planning For Your Visits

Week 4: The Visit and Follow-Up

- **Day of the Visit:**
 - Welcome the official and any staff they bring. Ensure they are greeted by leadership and introduced to key staff.
 - Follow the planned agenda, but remain flexible for any spontaneous questions or interactions.
 - Take photos and notes throughout the visit to document the event.
- **Post-Visit Follow-Up:**
 - Send a thank-you note or email to the elected official and their staff within 24-48 hours of the visit. Express appreciation for their time and highlights any important takeaways from the discussion.
 - Include any follow-up materials or information they requested during the visit.
 - If media attended, share any articles, photos, or coverage with the official's office and the facility.
- **Internal Debrief:**
 - Meet with the facility's leadership and staff to review the visit's success and identify next steps, including potential legislative follow-ups based on the official's feedback.

32



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Legislative Visits Tour Guide

- Designate a lead for giving the tour (e.g. facility administrator, facility director of nursing, director of rehab).
- Determine who from the facility and any organizational leadership team members will be participating in the facility tour.
- Determine facility tour path.
- Designate a location in the facility to meet with the elected official with after the tour.
- Designate a photographer to capture the moment.
- Ensure all facility staff are aware of the scheduled legislative visit.
- Ensure that there are activities occurring the facility tour to highlight activities and/or group therapy.

33



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Script Example for SNF Facility Legislative Visit

Introduction (5-10 minutes)

- **Leader:**
 - Good [morning/afternoon], [Representative/Senator/Councilmember] [Last Name]. We are so grateful you took the time to visit us here at [Facility Name] today. My name is [Your Name], and I am the [your title] here. I'll be guiding you through the facility today and introducing you to some of our staff and residents."
 - "We know how busy your schedule is, so we really appreciate you being here. This visit is important for us to show you the incredible work being done in our facility and to discuss some of the challenges we face."

Purpose of the Visit:

- "As you know, skilled nursing facilities like ours provide vital care to some of the most vulnerable members of our community—seniors and those with chronic illnesses. Our mission here is to provide high-quality, compassionate care, and today we'd like to share some of the ways we're succeeding, as well as the areas where we could use your help."

Facility Overview (5 minutes)

- **Leader:**
 - "To give you a little background, [Facility Name] has been serving the community for [X years]. We provide care to about [number] residents, and we specialize in [specific services, e.g., dementia care, rehabilitation, mental health services]. We're also proud of our specialized programs, like [mention specific program(s), e.g., wound care, Alzheimer's care, veteran services]."

Highlight key statistics:

- "Last year, we provided over [X] days of care, with an average occupancy rate of [X%]. Our staff of [number] professionals includes nurses, therapists, and support staff, who work together to ensure that each resident receives the care they need."

Local Impact:

- "We're not just a care provider, but also an important part of the local economy, employing [X number] of people from the community."

34



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Script Example for SNF Facility Legislative Visit

Tour and Resident Interaction (15-20 minutes)

- Leader (while walking through the facility):
 - “Let me take you on a brief tour of our facility. We’ll stop by a few areas to meet our staff and residents so you can see firsthand the level of care we provide.”
 - *[Tour the main areas: common spaces, therapy rooms, specialized care wings, etc.]*

Talking points during the tour:

- “As you can see, this is one of our physical therapy rooms, where residents work on regaining their mobility and strength. Therapy is a big part of what we do to help residents return home or improve their quality of life.”
- “We also provide specialized care for residents with Alzheimer’s and dementia. Over here, you’ll meet some of the staff working with these residents, using evidence-based practices to help maintain their cognitive function and independence as long as possible.”

Optional Resident Interaction (with consent):

- “Here we have [Resident’s Name]. [He/she/they] has been with us for [time period] and is a great example of the impact we can have here. Would you like to share your story, [Resident’s Name]?”

35



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Script Example for SNF Facility Legislative Visit

Discussion of Key Issues and Challenges (15-20 minutes)

Leader (after the tour, during a sit-down meeting):

- “We wanted to spend some time today talking about some of the broader challenges we face in skilled nursing care, especially in [state/community], and how policy changes might help us continue to provide the highest quality care.”
- Issue 1: Staffing Shortages:
 - “One of our biggest challenges is staffing. As you know, there’s a national shortage of healthcare workers, and this is especially true in skilled nursing. We often struggle to recruit and retain qualified nurses and aides, which can directly impact the care we provide.”
 - Ask for support on specific policy initiatives related to workforce development or funding for skilled nursing staff.
- Issue 2: Reimbursement Rates:
 - “Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement rates are a huge concern for us. Unfortunately, the rates we receive don’t always cover the full cost of care, especially when it comes to high-need residents who require more intensive services.”
 - Discuss any relevant legislation or budget measures affecting reimbursement rates, and ask for their support in increasing funding.
- Issue 3: Regulatory Burdens:
 - “We fully support the need for oversight, but some of the regulations we face can be quite burdensome without necessarily improving care. Streamlining some of these processes would free up more time for our staff to focus on residents.”
 - Provide examples of specific regulations that are particularly challenging and suggest how they could be reformed.

36



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Script Example for SNF Facility Legislative Visit

Closing Remarks (5 minutes)

- **Leader:**
 - “Before we wrap up, I just want to say again how much we appreciate you coming today. We hope this visit has given you a clearer picture of the vital work we do here and the challenges we face.”
 - “We truly believe that with your support, we can continue to provide excellent care for our residents and ensure that facilities like ours remain a key part of the healthcare system for seniors and vulnerable populations.”


Next Steps:

- “We’d love to stay in touch and continue this conversation. Please let us know how we can be a resource for you as you work on [specific policies related to healthcare, senior care, or skilled nursing]. We’ll be happy to provide any data or support as you consider legislative actions.”

Thank You:

- “Thank you again for your time today. We know how busy your schedule is, and we are so grateful for your attention to these important issues.”

37



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Capture The Moment

- Take a picture
- Share the picture and express your appreciation for the meeting on social media (remember to tag the legislators office, your facility, your company and NARA)
- NARA Social Media:
 - Twitter: @rehabassoc
 - LinkedIn: National Association of Rehab Providers and Agencies

38



39



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

“Joliet Terrace was fortunate to have hosted a visit from Senator Rachel Ventura on August 28th. Both the staff and residents were delighted to have met her and provide her with a tour of our facility. Over refreshments, we were able to have an honest conversation with the Senator, discussing various polices that would benefit residents living in long term behavioral health centers, as well as concerns with reimbursement for services rendered. The Senator was gracious and answered our questions and concerns with conviction. Joliet Terrace looks forward to many more visits from members of the Legislature with the hope that their voices will carry through to the lawmakers to improve the lives of our residents.”

*-KC Karanth, Administrator
Transitional Care Management*

40



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies


Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Legacy Healthcare Services & Charter Senior Living Franklin TN



Congressman Mark Green, M.D.
Tennessee's 7th District

41



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Follow-Up (Post-Visit Email Template)

- **Subject:** Thank You for Visiting [Facility Name],
- Dear [Official's Name],
 - Thank you for taking the time to visit [Facility Name] on [date]. We appreciated the opportunity to show you firsthand the work we do to care for our residents and the challenges we face in the skilled nursing sector.
 - As discussed, we are especially concerned with [key issue discussed during the visit], and we would greatly appreciate your continued support as you work on these important matters.
 - Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any further questions or if there is any way we can assist you. We look forward to staying in touch and working together on policies that benefit our community.
 - Warm regards,
 - [Your Name]
 - [Your Title]
 - [Facility Name]

42



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

Our voices truly are louder when we advocate together!

43



NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

Together We Thrive
www.naranet.org

WASHINGTON D.C.
Save the Date
April 29 - May 2, 2025
for Regulatory and Legislative
Updates and Hill Visits




NARA
The National Association of
Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies

44