



American Association of Poison Control Centers

NEWS RELEASE

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AAPCC Speaks Before Congress Regarding the Reauthorization of the Nation's Poison Control Center Law

ALEXANDRIA, VA – On Nov. 20, AAPCC President Marsha Ford, MD, FACMT, FACEP, spoke before the Congressional Subcommittee on Health of the Committee on Energy and Commerce in support of the twice-reauthorized Poison Control Center Law; first passed by Congress in 2000. Ford, joined at the hearing by John Fiegel, interim executive director of the AAPCC and Kathy Jacobitz, director of the Nebraska Regional Poison Center, also provided information about the substantial health care cost savings afforded by the national poison center network.

“It is estimated that every dollar invested in the poison center system saves \$13.39 in medical costs and lost productivity for a total savings of more than \$1.8 billion every year. Of that \$1.8 billion, the federal government saves approximately \$662.8 million in avoided medical care costs.

“In September 2012, the National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine, in its study ‘Best Care at Lower Cost,’ estimated that in 2009 America’s health care system wasted \$765 billion, or 31% of every dollar spent. Of this number, \$265 billion was wasted on unneeded health care services and missed prevention opportunities. In contrast, America’s utilization of the nation’s poison center information and case triage services resulted in avoiding more than 1.7 million unnecessary hospital visits and decreasing hospital length-of-stay in United States health care facilities in 2011.”

Ford also touched on additional features poison centers provide by stating, “A second critical function is the collection of poison exposure and disease surveillance data. Multiple federal agencies, including the CDC, Consumer Product Safety Commission, Environmental Protection Agency, Food and Drug Administration and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, use poison center local and national data for public health surveillance. This surveillance includes timely identification, characterization or ongoing tracking of outbreaks and other public health threats.

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“Additionally, the Office of National Drug Control Policy and the Department of Justice’s Drug Enforcement Administration have used poison center local and national data to monitor the rise in the abuse of synthetic drugs, support the Synthetic Drug Abuse Prevention Act of 2012, and formulate the National Drug Control Policy of 2012.”

For more information, the media may contact Brett Schuster, communications associate, at 703.894.1858 or schuster@aapcc.org.

About the American Association of Poison Control Centers:

The AAPCC supports the nation’s 56 poison centers in their efforts to prevent and treat poison exposures. Poison centers offer free, confidential medical advice 24 hours a day, seven days a week through the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222. This service provides a primary resource for poisoning information and helps reduce costly emergency department visits through in-home treatment.

To learn more, visit www.aapcc.org, like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter @AAPCC, or read our blog at aapcc.wordpress.com. To join your voice with other poison center supporters, register for the AAPCC advocacy network at www.capwiz.com/aapcc – click on “Action E-List.”

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