

# **NAB | NATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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## **National Advisory Board Issues ‘Declaration for Independence’: A Call-to-Action in Healthcare for Seniors and People with Disabilities**

### **National Advisory Board Will Host ‘Day of Dialogue’ Online Town Hall Meeting on May 21**

**VIRGINIA BEACH, Va.** (May 5, 2009) – America’s healthcare and long-term services need to undergo a radical, modern transformation to better meet the needs of today’s seniors and people with disabilities, according to a report released today by a 15-member private, national advisory board. The report, which will be supported by a nationwide “Day of Dialogue” on Thursday, May 21, calls for changes in public policies that both recognize and foster individual preferences for independent living through better integrated community-based services.

The report, entitled “Declaration for Independence: A Call to Transform Health and Long-Term Services for Seniors and People with Disabilities,” seeks to compel consumers, legislative officials, community-based organizations and healthcare providers to engage in efforts to modernize the healthcare infrastructure.

The Day of Dialogue – a virtual town hall meeting – will be held on Thursday, May 21, at 2:00 p.m. EDT. The public is invited to participate in the dialogue. Full details and registration are available at [www.declarationforindependence.org](http://www.declarationforindependence.org) or [www.mydfi.org](http://www.mydfi.org).

“Within the discussions to reform our Nation’s healthcare, we hope to serve as a catalyst for an open dialogue on how to address the long-term services and support needs of seniors and people with disabilities. More than talk, we want to offer solutions that work for everyone involved,” said Lex Frieden, Convener of the National Advisory Board (NAB) on Improving Health Care Services for Seniors and People with Disabilities that released the report. Mr. Frieden was an instrumental contributor to the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

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“In addition to the report issued today, we also are holding a Day of Dialogue, including our virtual town hall meeting, to broaden our call to action,” Frieden said.

“The problem we face today is a critical limitation of options for care,” Frieden added. “The social and economic consequences of providing only institutional options for care are antiquated at best. Given the growing number of aging Baby Boomers, the dramatic advances we have in technology and the increasing choices for independent living and care, now is the best time to ensure that our public policies catch up to the 21st century.”

As the report cites, by 2030, the number of people age 65 and older will double. Today, the U.S. census bureau identifies 41.3 million Americans as having a disability, many of whom are individuals who eventually will need long-term services and support. Further, 87 percent of people with disabilities who are age 50 and older prefer to live in their own homes. For the cost of providing assistance in a nursing facility for one individual, nearly three seniors or people with disabilities can receive services in the communities where they live.

The NAB’s report makes recommendations for changes based on the following six principles:

- 1) Enhance Self-Care through Improved Coordination
- 2) Encourage Community Integration and Involvement
- 3) Expand Accessibility of Services and Supports
- 4) Uphold Personal Preference
- 5) Empower People to Participate in the Economic Mainstream
- 6) Invest in Improved Technology.

To learn more, including downloading the full report or registering for the Day of Dialogue, visit [www.declarationforindependence.org](http://www.declarationforindependence.org) or [www.mydfi.org](http://www.mydfi.org).

### **About the National Advisory Board**

The National Advisory Board on Improving Health Care Services for Seniors and People with Disabilities was created by AMERIGROUP Corporation in 2007. Drawing from a wide range of distinguished community advocates and healthcare experts, the 15-member National Advisory Board has provided advice and guidance on delivering the highest quality services and ensuring the best health and community living outcomes for seniors and those with disabilities.

### **About AMERIGROUP Corporation**

AMERIGROUP Corporation, headquartered in Virginia Beach, Virginia, improves healthcare access and quality for the financially vulnerable, seniors and people with disabilities by developing innovative managed health services for the public sector. Through its subsidiaries, AMERIGROUP Corporation serves approximately 1.7 million people in Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia. For more information, visit [www.amerigroupcorp.com](http://www.amerigroupcorp.com).

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