



LISA **BLUNT ROCHESTER**  
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## REPS. BLUNT ROCHESTER, SMITH, WITH SUPPORT OF AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION, INTRODUCE MEASURE TO INCREASE ACCESS TO QUALITY CARDIAC REHABILITATION CARE

Washington, April 13, 2023 | [Andrew Donnelly](#) (302-893-4406)

**WASHINGTON** – Today, Rep. Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-Del.) and Rep. Adrian Smith (R-Neb.) introduced the Increasing Access to Quality Cardiac Rehabilitation Act of 2023. The bill would increase patient participation in cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation programs - two lifesaving services - by authorizing physician assistants (PAs), nurse practitioners (NPs), and clinical nurse specialists (CNSs) to order cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation services. Since heart disease and COPD are the number one and six leading cause of death each year, the increased use of these services, which are proven to reduce mortality rates, hospitalizations, and costs, is critical to improving the health of Americans.

“Heart disease is a leading cause of death in Delaware, but we know that reducing barriers to accessing cardiac rehabilitation has direct patient benefits, including the risk of a future cardiac event,” **said Rep. Blunt Rochester.** “I’m proud to join my colleague, Congressman Adrian Smith in ensuring that patients can receive timely referrals to these critical health care services and benefit from this effective treatment.”

“Nebraskans from all parts of the state are affected by heart and lung disease and need access to cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation programs, which are proven to enhance patients’ health and quality of life,” **said Rep. Smith.** “This legislation will increase access for cardiac patients, particularly in rural areas, by expanding who can order and supervise these programs, ensuring patients receive the care they need.”

“The American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) would like to thank Representatives Lisa Blunt Rochester and Adrian Smith for reintroducing the Increasing Access to Quality Cardiac Rehabilitation Care Act. Patients who receive cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation have better outcomes and lower costs, however currently, less than one in four eligible Medicare patients receive these services. Access is of even greater concern for female and minority patients and those living in rural and underserved areas,” **said AANP President April N. Kapu, DNP, APRN, ACNP-BC, FAANP, FCCM, FAAN.** “This legislation will increase patient access to the right care at the right time by removing the outdated federal barrier that excludes nurse practitioners (NPs) from being authorized to order these lifesaving programs. On behalf of the more than 355,000 NPs nationwide, we urge Congress to pass this bipartisan legislation so that patients can receive the cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation services they need and without unnecessary delays.”

“On behalf of the more than 168,000 PAs in the United States who account for more than 500 million patient visits each year, the American Academy of Physician Associates (AAPA) would like to thank Representatives Lisa Blunt Rochester and Adrian Smith for their continued leadership in reintroducing the Increasing Access to Quality Cardiac Rehabilitation Care Act in the 118th Congress,” **said Jennifer M. Orozco, DMSc, PA-C, DFAAPA, President and Board Chair, AAPA.** “This legislation will have a major impact on Medicare patients’ lives by expanding and providing access to cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation programs. These programs are critically important for patients suffering from a wide variety of cardiac and pulmonary diseases. Unfortunately, access to these programs remains a challenge for many patients, especially in rural and medically underserved areas. We urge Congress to pass this legislation as quickly as possible to remove unnecessary barriers to care and to ensure that more patients can access these lifesaving treatment programs.”

**The *Increasing Access to Quality Cardiac Rehabilitation Act of 2023* is supported by:**

- American Heart Association

- American Nurses' Association
- American Association of Cardiovascular & Pulmonary Rehabilitation
- American College of Cardiology
- American Association of Nurse Practitioners
- American Association for Respiratory Care
- WomenHeart
- American Academy of Physician Assistants
- Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association

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