



National Association of Health Underwriters

America's Benefits Specialists

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Idaho Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter Proclaims June as Long-term Care Partnership Awareness Month

(Arlington, VA) – Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter has proclaimed June as Long-Term Care Partnership Awareness Month in Idaho to bring attention to the reality that Medicare and Medicaid do not adequately address the costs of long-term care. Long-term care partnerships offer consumers an alternative to 'spending down' their entire life savings by forming a partnership between Medicaid and long-term care insurers.

"The purpose of these partnership programs is to provide access to affordable private long-term care insurance for individuals of moderate income who, in the past, have been unable to afford adequate coverage," explained Janet Trautwein, executive vice president and CEO of the National Association of Health Underwriters (NAHU). "This public-private partnership creates an innovative program offering individuals quality, affordable long-term care insurance and a way to receive needed care without depleting all their assets.

"Americans know they will need long-term care, but they remain unaware of the costs and falsely assume government programs will shoulder most of the burden, according to a survey commissioned by NAHU.

"This survey is a real call-to-action. Americans remain uninformed about the options, the costs and the specifics of how long-term care is paid for and administered. This lack of knowledge is dangerous because, unless we do something, it will increase the financial burden on taxpayers and the millions of families who will need long-term care."

Key findings include:

- Only one in four respondents correctly identified the national average range of annual long-term care costs (\$50,000-\$75,000).
- Twenty-nine percent underestimate the costs associated with private nursing-home care.
- Thirty-seven percent expect government-funded programs to pay for their long-term care.
- Twenty-four percent of Americans incorrectly assume Medicare covers the cost of long-term care.
- Ninety-one percent would prefer long-term care at home if it is ever needed.

"Very few Americans actually have long-term care bills paid for by government programs," added Trautwein. "Medicare covers very little of these costs, and Americans are forced to reduce their assets to poverty levels before they can be eligible for Medicaid, the federal/state health care program for the poor. Long-term care partnership plans provide incentives for individuals to use long-term care insurance to protect themselves, their families and, ultimately, their states, against the financial risks of long-term care.

"NAHU recently launched a national campaign in Idaho on long-term care partnerships entitled *Protect Your Health & Your Future Through Long-Term Care Partnerships*. Idaho is one of the first states to offer long-term care partnership policies to its residents and through this national campaign, we hope to educate consumers, policy makers and the media about this new program and the importance of planning for your long-term care needs."

The National Association of Health Underwriters represents 20,000 professional health insurance agents and brokers who provide insurance for millions of Americans. NAHU is headquartered in Arlington, VA. For more information, please contact Kelly Loussedes at 703-276-3835 or email kloussedes@nahu.org.

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