



*Proudly Supporting All Military Families with a Dependent with Special Medical and/or Educational Needs*

April 30, 2013

To Whom it May Concern,

The Military Special Needs Network writes today in support of Kaitlyn's Law, HR 1705, which will clarify physical therapy benefits for dependent family members of military service members under the TRICARE program.

Over 120,000 military dependents have disabilities and thousands qualify for physical therapy benefits. Certain physical therapy services have been denied to beneficiaries because TRICARE has determined the services do not fall within the "traditional" mold of physical therapy services. Kaitlyn's Law will specifically explain that therapies performed using a variety of therapy tools such as a ball, balance board, horse, barrel or bench, are included as TRICARE covered services.

Currently, the TRICARE Policy Manual, section 18.2, chapter 7, 2.1, physical therapy is described to include "the treatment by physical means, hydrotherapy, heat, or similar modalities, physical agents, biomechanical and neurophysiological principles, and devices to relieve pain, restore maximum function, and prevent disabilities following disease, injury, or loss of a body part." HR 1705 better clarifies this, and ensures that beneficiaries receive rehabilitative therapies that are prescribed by their physician and included in their individualized plan of care authorized by his or her physical therapist, to include, "therapies provided on a horse, balance board, ball, bolster, and bench". This law does not expand benefits, nor will it increase costs. The beneficiaries receiving these services are already currently entitled to and are receiving physical therapy services. This law will merely permit their providers to use the best tool for their medical needs. It will ensure the funds spent on their therapy are providing the greatest benefit for each individual beneficiary.

Military dependents deserve the access to individualized plans of therapeutic care. Whether traditional tools or innovative approaches, TRICARE beneficiaries deserve health care policies designed with their needs in mind. Ensuring that our military dependents with disabilities are well cared for is one important way this country can demonstrate our gratitude, respect and honor for our military and their families.

We thank you for your commitment to supporting the families of our nation's military, and urge you support HR 1705.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy Kruse". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Wendy Kruse  
President/CEO  
Military Special Needs Network