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# Regional Patient Advocacy Leaders Summit Roundtable Meeting Recap—Overview

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Colorado  
Gerontological  
Society

1330 Leyden St #148  
303-333-3482  
303-333-9112 (fax)  
[www.senioranswers.org](http://www.senioranswers.org)



## The 2016 Election: How Does It Affect Patients

The Denver Regional PALS meeting was held in Denver, Colorado on December 1, 2016. About 40 patient advocates and policy leaders came together to discuss the theme “2016 Elections: How Does It Affect Patients”.

Based on a presentation by the Governor’s Senior Health Policy Advisor, patient advocates were encouraged to hear that Colorado will continue many of the health initiatives that have been adopted and are currently being implemented including reduction of obesity, preventing and treating diabetes, and providing quality air



control to improve health, especially for the chronically ill and elders of our state. The State released the Strategic Plan on Aging on 11/30/16. The recommendations are being reviewed in light of the considerable shift in the number of seniors both currently living in Colorado and the increases in Baby Boomers reaching retirement and needing more health care that are expected in the next 25 years. Some initiatives that are specifically tied to the ACA will continue to be reviewed and discussed, but it is too early to have much detail on the decisions that will be made by the State. There is some concern that some of the current programs may be lost since Colorado is a Medicaid expansion state and runs their own exchange.



Looking at federal issues, Senator Bennet’s office noted there is less certainty on what is happening. While the Senator will be in the minority, he is well positioned to have input on decision-making for health bills. The Senator’s office expressed the need to look for common ground to come forward with the best health care plan for all Americans. A discussion followed using the California PALS slide on what we think “will stay”, “what will change”, “what’s new” and “what to watch for”. This provided a lively discussion in which advocates were able to begin to identify their role

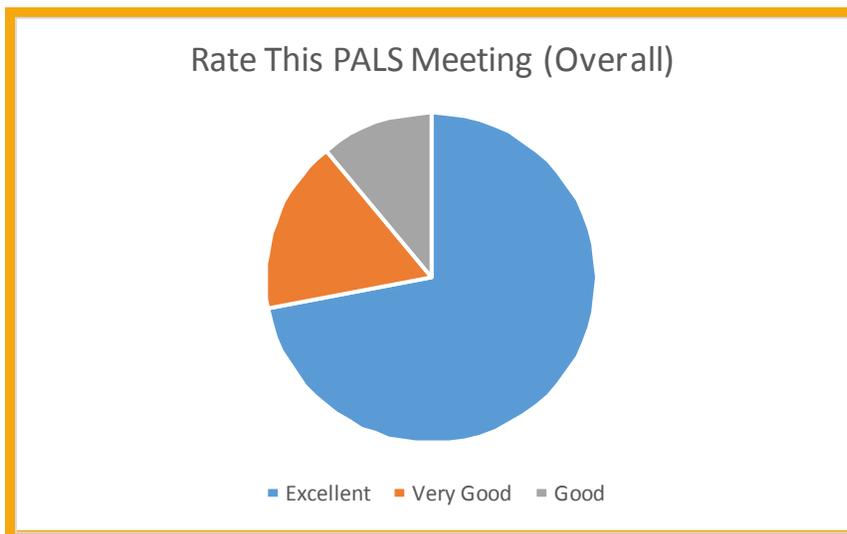
in federal policy as it relates to the ACA. Advocates were encouraged to share their concerns and to be ready to act with limited advance warning. Federal Staff stressed the best time to have input to changes is during the drafting of the bill, which often happens over a very short time period. There is some concern over the Ryan budget and what that may mean for many of the health programs.

The last presentation focused on state legislative issues that affect those with disabilities and seniors. Legislation has been passed to provide a caregiver for hospital patients both during admission and upon discharge to help with transitions to home. Another bill is being considered that would improve working conditions for home care workers. Advocates, as well as constituents, are the most important drivers of changes in policy. Communication and working closely with elected officials is critical to making these changes.



In summary, advocates were encouraged to continue their advocacy, to find ways to preserve the current “wins” and to provide input and suggest solutions on anticipated changes in the ACA by being involved and at the table early in the discussions. Federal advocacy will be key to keeping health insurance for those most in need of health care coverage.

Funding for the Denver Regional PALS meeting was provided through the generous support of National PALS, The Aids Institute (with funding from GlaxoSmithKline) and AbbVie.



# 2016 Colorado Regional PALS Evaluation

## 1. Please rate each of the Morning Sessions on the following 5-Point Scale.

Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Did Not Attend
29%	42%	29%	0%	0%	0%

## 2. Please share feedback on the Sessions. Please be as specific as Possible

- Discussion from Governor’s office was detailed & thorough; Federal discussion limited & speculative; State discussion was awesome & informative
- Rep Danielson was great also; What a smart and wonderfully organized event. Very impressive group of people. Liked the Q&A best.
- Unfortunately, no R representation
- Last session with Jessie Danielson was particularly useful
- Wish more specific
- Jessie Danielson was terrific! Very useful grounded information.
- More policy makers & department (HCPF & DHS) would be nice. Fed & State (Gov. Office) Reps were great. More legislators also would be good but I understand they are hard to get.
- The updates on the issues were very informative & useful
- Great info!
- So much unknown!
- Rep. Jessie Danielson is wonderful – such a helpful, genuine & constructive presentation. Thank you!

## 3. How would you rate this Regional PALS Overall on the following 5-Point Scale?

Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
72%	17%	11%	0%	0%

## 4. Please share feedback on this Regional PALS Overall. Please be as specific as possible.

- Thank you for organizing and the invitation
- I benefited from each presentation, particularly because I have not been involved, except for “surface” level in advocacy
- New to the group & excited to be involved

**5. How many PALS events have your attended prior to this event, at the Regional or National Level?**

None   One/Where   Two/Where  
59%   29%/CO   12%/CO

**6. The Colorado Regional PALS objectives are listed below. How well do you feel these objectives were met?**

To better understand the Governor’s 2017 health care agenda.

<b>Very Well</b>	<b>Somewhat Well</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Not Very Well</b>	<b>Not At All Well</b>
56%	43%	1%	0%	0%

To increase knowledge and understanding of the impact of the 2016 elections on health care policy at the federal level for 2017-18.

<b>Very Well</b>	<b>Somewhat Well</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Not Very Well</b>	<b>Not At All Well</b>
62%	25%	19%	0%	0%

To increase the number of patient advocates involved in the 2017 Colorado legislative session.

<b>Very Well</b>	<b>Somewhat Well</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Not Very Well</b>	<b>Not At All Well</b>
62%	19%	19%	0%	0%

**7. Please rate how useful, in your day-to-day work as advocates, was attending the Regional PALS?**

<b>Highly Useful</b>	<b>Very Useful</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Not Very Useful</b>	<b>Not at All Useful</b>
56%	31%	13%	0%	0%

**8. Please list specific action(s) you plan to take as a result of attending this PALS event.**

- Share info with colleagues, students
- Reach out to the folks at the Capitol
- I plan to make more calls to Alec Garnett and attend a legislative session.
- Looking forward to promoting continuity of care for chronic care populations
- Meet with state legis.
- More legislative contacts
- I'll be contacting Jessie Danielson.
- Enlist help of State legislators for bill idea

**9. The best thing about my experience at the Regional PALS was:**

- Making the issue of approaching our Representative a lot less scary
- The optimistic direction of the conversation was much appreciated
- Meeting the advocates!
- It opened my eyes to different perspectives from the legislative side of govt.
- Meeting others
- Connections with policy makers
- Seeing who the others are in this common "fight"

**10. How can we improve what we are doing through PALS? Please be as specific as possible**

- Was lovely
- In view of the uncertainties caused by the recent election, have another event after things have settled and trends can be identified as developing
- Pre-submitted questions
- Dept. people, more of them would be good.
- Have more often!

**11. Are you, or others from your organization, interested in being involved in future PALS events?**

Yes	No
100%	0%