



YOUR ACTION IS NEEDED NOW!

Send a Message to your Congressional Representatives to Support Medicare Coverage for Dental & Sjögren's Awareness Month

Your voice can make a profound difference! The more people who contact their legislators, the greater chance we have to succeed in raising awareness and increasing support for our Foundation's advocacy goals. Please act now to have your voice heard by your representatives on these important issues!

Janet E. Church

Sjögren's Foundation, President & CEO

This document highlights the Foundation's current advocacy goals. It also provides suggestions and talking points to help you clearly communicate about Sjögren's and deliver the talking points we need to get across.

#1: Take action with the Sjögren's Foundation as we lead the fight to have **Medicare cover medically necessary dental services for individuals with Sjögren's and for those with related autoimmune diseases.**

- Our application was submitted to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in February. We hope to meet with CMS this spring to present data and compelling patient stories. See the submission and highlights at [here](#).
- Sjögren's is one of the most prevalent autoimmune diseases, affecting an estimated four million Americans. As you know, Sjögren's symptoms include extensive dryness throughout the body, including the eyes and mouth, profound fatigue, and chronic pain. In fact, in our latest *Living with Sjögren's* patient survey, dry mouth is one of the top-most symptoms experienced by our community.
- Complications related to Sjögren's can lead to high out-of-pocket medical costs, especially for dental services. In addition, medical and dental visits are often deferred which can lead to worse health outcomes for patients living with Sjögren's.

#2: Help us secure introduction of a **resolution in Congress commemorating April as Sjögren's Awareness Month.**

- Although a member of the U.S. Congress read into the Congressional Record that April is Sjögren's Awareness Month years ago, a resolution is much more powerful and will reach many more Congressional members.
- The resolution language details key areas of concern for patients in a way that will educate Congress about the disease and help build consistent and accurate messaging within the government and government agencies.

HERE IS HOW YOU CAN TAKE ACTION:

CALL AND/OR EMAIL your Congressional representatives and ask them to support the millions of Americans living with Sjögren's by **supporting the congressional resolution and the Sjögren's Foundation's request to have CMS cover medically necessary dental services under Medicare.**

If you do not know your representatives, you can look up your Senators and Representatives in the House at: <https://www.congress.gov/members/find-your-member>.
Or call 202-224-3121 and ask to be connected to your representative.

FOLLOW UP: After your contact your representatives, fill out [the survey linked here](#) and our advocacy team will follow up with those offices.

TALKING POINTS FOR YOUR REPRESENTATIVES:

*It is unlikely you will be connected directly with your congressman or their specific staff. When you call, ask to leave a comment for the Representative/Senator's health staffer. This will ensure it goes to the appropriate staff. **YOUR VOICE IS NEEDED NOW TO RAISE AWARENESS FOR THESE ISSUES TO ENSURE LAWMAKERS KNOW ABOUT THE TREMENDOUS HEALTH BURDEN SJÖGREN'S PRESENTS AS WELL AS THE NEED FOR MORE RESEARCH TO UNDERSTAND THE DISEASE AND HOW CONGRESS CAN HELP.***

YOUR TALKING POINTS ARE:

- **I am a constituent in your district living with Sjögren's, a serious, systemic autoimmune disease affecting four million Americans.**
- **Very briefly tell your story here and how Sjögren's has affected your life. Then state: I wanted to ask for your support and help:**
 - (1) **The Sjögren's Foundation requested a meeting with CMS to discuss our nomination of Sjögren's and autoimmune diseases for Medicare coverage of medically necessary dental services.**
 - ASK: The **Sjögren's Foundation** ("We") are asking Members of Congress to support our meeting request to ensure CMS continues to engage on the issue of expanding Medicare access to cover medically necessary dental care for individuals with Sjögren's and other autoimmune diseases.
 - (2) **The Sjögren's Foundation is sharing a draft resolution to commemorate April as Sjögren's Awareness Month.**
 - ASK: This is a critical issue for me. This resolution will highlight the burden of disease for those of us with Sjögren's and increase the understanding of key facts about the disease. Do you think Senator/Representative (name) would consider introducing or supporting this resolution?

A Final Thank You Note from Janet E. Church:

Thank you for calling your representatives to stress the importance of these issues! Be sure to complete the [survey form](#) with your name, the rep office you called, and what you spoke about so our Advocacy team can follow up!