

ASCRS Leadership, in Conjunction with the Alliance of Specialty Medicine, Lobby Capitol Hill on Key Healthcare Issues

July 23, 2012 (WESTBURY, NY) -- President-elect of the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery (ASCRS), Dr. Eric Donnerfeld, traveled to Capitol Hill recently with members of ASCRS' Government Relations Committee to address key healthcare issues including maintaining access to specialty medicine, ensuring quality reporting mandates are meaningful and relevant, and securing Medicare physician payment reform. Dr. Donnerfeld is a founding partner of Ophthalmic Consultants of Long Island.

The visit to Capitol Hill this was part of the Alliance of Specialty Medicine's Advocacy Conference. ASCRS joined specialty physicians from 11 other medical specialty organizations of the Alliance of Specialty Medicine from across the country in hearing presentations and exchanging ideas with House and Senate members of Congress and healthcare policy leaders from both sides of the aisle in addition to regulatory agencies.

According to the latest issue of the ASCRS-ASOA *Washington Watch Weekly*, the physicians also met with their respective congressmen and senators to discuss the issues that impact both physicians and their patients including: access to specialty care, fair Medicare physician reimbursement (SGR), IPAB repeal, medical liability reform, and quality improvement and value based payment reform.

"As president elect of ASCRS it was extremely interesting to meet with Representatives and Senators in Washington to discuss the effects of the Affordable Health Care Act (ObamaCare) on the future of medicine," said Dr. Donnerfeld. "The importance of preserving the right of every American to have quality health care and to have access to the physician of their choice as well as the best technology is our goal."

The *Washington Watch Weekly* reports that ASCRS, in conjunction with the Alliance, has been concerned with the deteriorating access to specialty care as a result of failed policies, the largest of which is the broken Medicare physician payment system. During the hill visits, physicians called on Congress to pass a permanent SGR fix prior to the end of the year and

support legislation that would empower Medicare beneficiaries to see the physician of their choice by permitting private contracting on a case-by-case basis in addition to supporting IPAB repeal efforts. ASCRS also urged Congress to ensure that physician quality reporting mandates are meaningful and relevant to specialty physicians and their patients and requested a delay in the implementation of the Value-Based Payment Modifier (VBPM).

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About Ophthalmic Consultants of Long Island

OCLI, one of the largest ophthalmology practices in the nation, consists of 25 eye doctors and specialists representing most subspecialties of ophthalmology and optometry in 9 locations throughout Long Island; in Rockville Centre, Lynbrook, Valley Stream, East Setauket, Manhasset, Mineola, East Meadow, Port Jefferson and Inwood. OCLI also has a research department that is involved in FDA studies to improve the treatment and diagnosing of ophthalmic diseases. For more information, please call 1-866-SEE-OCLI (1-866-733-6254) or visit <http://www.oci.net>.

About ASCRS

The American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery (ASCRS) is an independent, non-profit, ophthalmic, sub-specialty society founded in August of 1974. ASCRS is dedicated to advancing the art and science of anterior segment surgery. Since 1974, the field has experienced significant advances in technology and clinical science. Through its educational programs, publications and on-line resources, ASCRS has become the surgeons' primary source of up-to-date information on developments within the field, as well as the regulatory information affecting the practice of medicine. The mission of the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery is to advance the art and science of ophthalmic surgery and the knowledge and skills of ophthalmic surgeons. It does so by providing clinical and practice management education and by working with patients, government, and the medical community to promote the delivery of quality eye care.