# Script (Phone call) for Coalition’s Individual Members to Schedule Meetings In-District with Members of Congress

**Hello, I am a constituent of Representative \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or Senator \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

**I am \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with the (Practice or Employer\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ here in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I am a member of (Association or Group). I am working with the Medicare Mental Health Workforce Coalition. Our organization is a member of the Coalition.**

**The Coalition supports the passage of “The Mental Health Access Improvement Act” (S. 286 or HR 945) in Congress which would recognize** mental health counselors (MHCs) and marriage and family therapists (MFTs) as Medicare providers, and would increase the pool of eligible mental health professionals by over 200,000 licensed practitioners.

Despite the high rates of mental health disorders, many Medicare beneficiaries do not have access to a mental health professional, especially in rural areas.

I would like to schedule a meeting with Representative \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or Senator \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ when he/she is back in the district to gain his/her support for **“The Mental Health Access Improvement Act” (S. 286 or HR 945), and discuss the importance of this bill and issue.**

**Would you be able to arrange a time to for me to meet soon, so I can provide more details to the Congressman or Senator?**

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**Use this information only if the staff contact on the phone would like more information.**

Medicare presently recognizes psychiatrists, psychologists, clinical social workers and psychiatric nurses to provide covered mental health services to Medicare beneficiaries. Mental health counselors and MFTs have equivalent education and training to clinical social workers, but are not eligible to serve Medicare beneficiaries.

All 50 states license mental health counselors and MFTs to diagnose and treat mental and emotional disorders. Many federal programs already reimburse mental health counselors and MFTs for services, including the Department of Veterans Affairs, the U.S. Army, and TRICARE. All private health plans also reimburse MHCs and MFTs.

Medicare beneficiaries need more mental health services, particularly in rural and underserved areas. Mental health counselors and MFTs are trained to serve these populations and are geographically accessible.