



Advocacy Council



October 1, 2010

CALL TO ACTION

On November 30, physicians will see their Medicare reimbursement REDUCED 23.3%. On January 1, 2011, their Medicare reimbursement will be REDUCED another 6.1%. None of our practices can absorb a 30% cut in reimbursement. While many people believe this will not happen, that congress again will delay the cut and not address the real problem of the sustainable growth formula, we can't be sure.

At this time we are not asking for a letter writing campaign however, we do believe a call to your representative is important and would be beneficial to this cause. Please contact your Congressmen and Senator and ask what their position is on this cut in reimbursement. Ask them what is their understanding of SGR and how it applies to Medicare payment. Also, make it a priority to know the candidates that are running for these offices and ask what their position is on these issues. These are the people that will make the decisions regarding our practices beginning January 2011.

When talk with them, please remind them that a reduction of this magnitude has TWO impacts.

- First may dramatically **decrease access to care for Medicare beneficiaries**. In a recent AAOE survey of 446 orthopedic practices from all over the country, 24% stated they would stop seeing Medicare patients completely. 32% said they would limit care to 1 new patient per doctor per day and 26% stated they would limit care to 2-3 new Medicare patients per doctor per day. In summary, more than 82% of all orthopedic practices indicated they would substantially reduce the number of Medicare patients they were willing to see.
- Equally important, and often over looked, is the fact that if this cut goes through, it may **have a profound impact on JOBS**. 87% of all respondents stated that if the cut goes through, they will have to freeze staff pay. 68% stated they would reduce health insurance benefits. 42% said they reduce staff hours (but not pay) and 41% said they would cut staff. In all – virtually every group indicated they would do something that would have a negative impact on employees. View results from [AAOE's Medicare Quick Poll Results](#).

Our representatives need to know that not just patient access is on the line – JOBS are on the line as well. If the results of this orthopedic based survey is extrapolated to every medical group in the country, thousand and potentially hundreds of thousands of jobs may very well be impacted if these cuts go through.

Your Congressmen and Senators may be visiting your area while in recess. If they are not, contact them through their local constituent offices or in Washington. All of their information is available on line. This will also give you the opportunity to get to know them and express your business and individual concerns.

Here are a few website addresses to assist you:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medicare_Sustainable_Growth_Rate

<http://biggovernment.com/lshratz/2010/06/18/doc-fix-fails-as-goes-the-sgr-so-goes-health-care-reform/>

<http://www.ama-assn.org/amednews/2010/05/03/gvsa0503.htm>

We need the power of the group. Share this information with your staff, ask everyone to call their senators and congressman explaining we need a permanent fix to the SGR.

Thank you,

Advocacy Council

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