



Take action now: Tell Congress to repeal Medicare's flawed SGR formula

Events in Washington, D.C., pose enormous threats to the future of medicine and patient care. The AMA is urging every physician in this country to engage their U.S. representatives and U.S. senators on looming decisions that will determine the future of health care.

A new congressional Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction has been granted broad power to develop a legislative package by Nov. 23 to reduce spending by \$1.2 trillion. If Congress fails to enact spending reductions by Dec. 23, across-the-board cuts will be imposed to achieve the target amount.

Medicare provider payments are on the chopping block again at a time when **physician payments are already slated to be cut 30 percent on Jan. 1 under current law.**

A Medicare advisory committee created by Congress is contemplating recommendations for an **18 percent cut in payments to non-primary care physicians** over the next three years followed by a freeze for seven years. Medicare payments to **primary care physicians would be frozen for 10 years** under the misguided scheme concocted by this congressional advisory group.

Over the next few years, physicians who fail to comply with electronic prescribing, electronic health records and quality reporting requirements face additional payment reductions under current law.

Some physicians have said they are tired of going hat in hand every year asking members of Congress not to cut their Medicare payments; that they don't believe they can make a difference. This defeatism will produce a self-fulfilling prophesy. **Fatigue and failure to engage in the legislative process will be fatal to your medical practice.** Every physician is at risk—solo or small private practice as well as those employed by physician-directed groups, hospitals or health plans.

The AMA is working with state and national medical specialty societies in a united campaign to convince Congress to shift the focus from destructive payment cuts to reforms that will stabilize the Medicare program.

Procedural protections granted to the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction also offer a **unique opportunity to advance medical liability reforms** that have been blocked in the U.S. Senate. As we all know, fixing a broken medical liability system will lower federal spending and benefit patients. The AMA convened a medical liability task force composed of state and national specialty society leaders to coordinate advocacy efforts on this issue, as well.

Deadlines for congressional action are just weeks away. The stakes for medicine are enormous. Your ability to deliver high-quality care and preserve patients' access to care hangs in the balance.

Together, the AMA, state medical societies, national medical specialty societies and individual physicians across the country can secure a better outcome than what looms ahead. Join us in the campaign for a better future for physicians and patients by sending an urgent message on this critical issue NOW— [click here](#).

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