



Overview of AAHKS Advocacy Steps to Oppose Proposed 20% Cut to Medicare Payments

The following is an evolving list of comprehensive advocacy steps that will be undertaken by AAHKS, its lobbyists and consultants and allies. All actions will take place in July and August 2026 to be most influential on the development of the final 2027 Physician Fee Schedule rule. Specific instructions will shortly be shared with members to explain advocacy actions that they can take.

I. Developing Congressional Pressure

- AAHKS members and their patients and family members contact their Congressional delegations (phone, email, in person) to ask them to oppose the CMS proposed cuts to arthroplasty
- AAHKS lobbyists meet with Congressional offices to explain issue in more detail
- AAHKS asks members of Congress to send a letter to CMS opposing the proposed cuts. AAHKS will draft the letter
- AAHKS recruits members of Congress to express opposition to the cuts at any Committee hearings where HHS or CMS officials are present

II. Advocacy with Administration

- AAHKS will meet with senior CMS and HHS political and career leaders, possibly including Secretary Kennedy and Dr. Oz or their immediate deputies
- Material to be directly shared with administration will explain how AAHKS members should be seen as primary care physicians for osteoarthritis. Further that AAHKS members are key to the MAHA agenda as joint replacement is essential to keep seniors active, healthy, mobile and independent
- Further, that the proposed cuts will further accelerate health care consolidation and impossibility of independent ortho surgical practices serving Medicare patients
- AAHKS prepares and sends a formal comment letter to CMS opposing the cuts by contesting the studies that CMS relies on and sharing other studies suggesting that THA and TKA are undervalued
- AAHKS will also meet with White House Domestic Policy Council staff and staff of the Office of Management and Budget

III. Collecting and Coordinating with Allies

- Identify allied organization: surgical device manufacturers; patient advocacy organizations; regional and local hospital systems; other surgical specialties
- Share AAHKS prepared summary and talking points with allies
- AAHKS will ask allies to coordinate on lobbying Congress; contact the administration to express opposition; and use AAHKS-prepared analysis to formally comment to CMS against the cuts

IV. Outreach to Trade Press

- As CMS shares its justification for the proposed cuts to national press and trade press, AAHKS and consultants and lobbyists contact trade press and local media to explain errors and deficiencies in CMS arguments that can be seen when analyzed in detail

V. Other

- AAHKS is considering all possible options for litigation against CMS
- AAHKS will share latest analysis with members explaining extent of opportunities and legal limitations of unionization and work stoppages