



Sound Policy. Quality Care.

September 20, 2021

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Senate Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
House Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
House Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Action needed to prevent Medicare payment cuts and maintain access to specialty care

Dear Leader Schumer, Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, and Leader Hoyer:

Thank you for your leadership and your tireless efforts to sustain access to specialty care during the ongoing public health emergency (PHE). The Alliance of Specialty Medicine (the “Alliance”) represents more than 100,000 specialty physicians and is dedicated to the development of sound federal health care policy that fosters patient access to the highest quality specialty care. As patient and physician advocates, we write to urge that Congress act before the end of the year to prevent significant Medicare pay cuts, which will impact many physician specialties effective January 1, 2022. Specifically, we request Congress **extend critical financial relief to physicians facing the looming threat of Medicare conversion factor cuts and Congressionally-mandated sequestration cuts to payment for services provided to Medicare beneficiaries.**

The Alliance appreciates the action Congress took in the *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021* to modify the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS) final rule by providing a 3.75% increase in MPFS payments for calendar year (CY) 2021 to mitigate the impact of budget neutrality cuts resulting from changes to the codes for office and outpatient evaluation and management services. This 3.75% pay increase is set to expire on January 1, 2022, at the same time that the 2% Medicare sequestration payment cut will be reinstated. Further exacerbating the situation, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that the

www.specialtydocs.org

info@specialtydocs.org

American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery • American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American College of Mohs Surgery • American College of Osteopathic Surgeons • American Gastroenterological Association
American Society for Dermatologic Surgery Association • American Society of Cataract & Refractive Surgery • American Society of Echocardiography
American Society of Plastic Surgeons • American Society of Retina Specialists • American Urological Association
Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations • Congress of Neurological Surgeons • National Association of Spine Specialists

American Rescue Plan Act will trigger the statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (PAYGO) and mandate Medicare spending reductions of an estimated 4%, or \$36 billion, estimated to take effect in January 2022. Therefore, while still in the midst of a PHE, these policies will collectively subject specialty physicians to multiple layers of Medicare cuts in 2022, notably:

- Expiration of the 2021 3.75% MPFS CF increase;
- 2% sequestration cut; and
- 4% PAYGO cut.

We are deeply concerned that these steep cuts could have serious financial consequences for physicians who are already under financial distress due to the sustained COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you for your serious consideration of our request. We look forward to working with you to prevent these cuts and preserve Medicare beneficiaries' timely access to specialty care.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Facial Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery
American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American College of Osteopathic Surgeons
American College of Mohs Surgery
American Gastroenterological Association
American Society for Dermatologic Surgery Association
American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery
American Society of Echocardiography
American Society of Plastic Surgeons
American Society of Retina Specialists
American Urological Association
Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
National Association of Spine Specialists