



# TAKE ACTION!

American Association of Neurological Surgeons  
Congress of Neurological Surgeons

## Grassroots Action Alert

### Now is the Time for Congress to Fix the Flawed Medicare Physician Payment System

#### CONTACT CONGRESS TODAY!

In less than a week, Medicare payments to physicians will be cut by nearly 22% unless Congress acts to stop the cut. These cuts are being produced by Medicare's sustainable growth rate (SGR) formula, which has been universally viewed as fatally flawed since its inception. In the past, Congress has repeatedly intervened to prevent similar cuts from going into effect; however these stop-gap measures have exacerbated the problem by increasing the severity of future cuts and making the cost of permanent Medicare payment reform more expensive.

While the legislative pathway for repealing the SGR and preventing these cuts remains unclear at this time, one thing is certain – **you must contact Congress today and tell your elected officials that America's neurosurgeons will not support another short-term, Band-Aid approach to addressing the SGR. Now is the time to permanently repeal the flawed Medicare physician payment update formula once and for all!**

#### TAKE ACTION NOW

The AANS and CNS are working hard on your behalf to prevail upon Congress to repeal and replace the flawed SGR payment formula. But we also need **your help** to make lawmakers understand our concerns and position on the issues. To help us help you, **WE NEED YOU TO:**

1. **Complete** a brief Medicare participation survey at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/medicare>
2. **Call** your Senators and Representative in Washington, D.C. using the Alliance of Specialty Medicine Legislative Hotline at 1-866-899-4088.
  - Follow the instructions and prompts
  - The AANS/CNS 4-digit **specialty code is 9595**
  - Once you enter your zip code, you will be connected to your elected officials
3. **Send** an email to your Senators and Representative. To send a letter (which you should personal to make it more effective) to your elected officials go to: <http://capwiz.com/noc/issues/alert/?alertid=14724951>



### **MESSAGE POINTS**

- As a surgeon and as your constituent, I urge Congress to enact a permanent solution to the flawed Medicare physician fee schedule. A short-term solution is unacceptable.
- In the past, Congress has repeatedly intervened to prevent similar cuts from going into effect; however these stop-gap measures have exacerbated the problem by increasing the severity of future cuts and making the cost of permanent Medicare payment reform more expensive
- Physicians are the foundation to a strong Medicare program and without a fix by Congress, access to care for millions of patients, especially our nation's seniors and military families, is threatened as a result of this flawed Medicare policy.
- Results from a new national survey of neurosurgeons paint a troubling picture for seniors if drastic Medicare physician payment cuts continue:
  - Nearly 40% of neurosurgeons will decrease the number of new Medicare patients they see and over 18% will no longer take any new Medicare patients.
  - Over 50% of neurosurgeons will stop providing certain services and nearly 53% percent will reduce the time they spend with Medicare patients.
  - Nearly 60% of neurosurgeons have reduced the number of Medicare patients in their practice due to low reimbursement and over two-thirds now referring patients with complex problems, meaning many seniors now have to travel further to get the care they need.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

More information about this and other healthcare reform issues can be found on the AANS and CNS websites at:

[http://www.aans.org/legislative/aans/Neuro\\_HealthCareReform.asp](http://www.aans.org/legislative/aans/Neuro_HealthCareReform.asp)  
<http://www.cns.org/advocacy/wc/nsHealthcareReform.aspx>

If you have any questions, please contact Katie O. Orrico, Director of the AANS/CNS Washington Office at [korrico@neurosurgery.org](mailto:korrico@neurosurgery.org) or 202-446-2024.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!!!**

