

March 2010

Dear Patient,

As your physician, my ability to treat you may soon be at risk. According to Washington's flawed Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula, physicians will see a **21% decrease in Medicare reimbursement** starting as early as April 1, 2010 although the Senate recently (March 10th) voted to again delay this year's steep physician payment cut to October 1, 2010. If the House adopts this Senate bill, America's seniors and their physicians will be left in limbo, and access to health care for Medicare patients will continue to be in grave danger. This cut will also include TRICARE, the insurance for our military families.

Understanding that we have a tremendous number of Medicare patients in our community, a 21% reduction will be catastrophic for some medical practices that are already having difficulty just getting by.

This reduction, however, won't just affect Medicare and Tricare patients. Essentially all insurance companies now set their reimbursement rates in proportion to Medicare. A reduction of 21% by Medicare will also result in a 21% reduction in virtually all insurance compensation. Medical care is one of the largest employers in Indian River County and the results for this community will be devastating. Employees will have to be let go. Our fragile local economy will be further harmed. This alone could very well damage our community as much as the recent recession.

Physician practices may be forced to limit appointments or cease taking new Medicare patients. It is expected that some physician practices will merge in an attempt to survive. Physicians close to retirement may very well do so. Recruiting young physicians to the region will become increasingly difficult. If doctors can't make ends meet, they will leave their practices to seek other forms of employment.

If you are concerned about keeping the quality and access to medical care you currently have, please contact your U.S. Senators and Representative at the addresses below:

Sen. Bill Nelson
United States Senate
716 Hart Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510-0905
FAX 202-228-2183
<http://billnelson.senate.gov>

Sen. George LeMieux
United States Senate
356 Russell Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510-0906
FAX 202-228-5171
info@lemieux.senate.gov

Rep. Bill Posey
United States House of
Representatives
132 Cannon House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515
FAX 202-225-3516
<http://www.house.gov/posey>

Form letters will be made available for your use. Faxing is probably the best way to send your message. Regular mail is inevitably delayed, as it is rerouted undergoing additional scrutiny for security reasons. You can also go to your legislator's website and send an email message.

We need your help. Please make your voices heard before it is truly too late.

Thank you.

