



Wed., March 3, 2010

Dear Colleagues,

Last night, the U.S. Senate voted to freeze physicians' Medicare payment rates once again, forestalling a 21.2-percent cut that otherwise would have affected all claims for services provided in March. The freeze extends 2009 rates until April 1. Discussions are still underway in the House and Senate on the next steps that will be taken to address the Medicare payment crisis, but another temporary fix is not acceptable. Congress must take swift and permanent action to address this matter. The Senate voted 78 to 19 to approve the freeze. **Senator Cornyn voted against the measure.** Senator Hutchison did not vote.

The most important action you can take now is to CONTACT YOUR CONGRESSMAN.

Anecdotes about your patients and your practice work best. Tell them how the 21 percent Medicare cut will affect your practice and your ability to care for your patients. The SGR formula is inappropriate. It needs to be replaced with a system that makes fiscal sense for physicians and patients. Only a permanent fix will mend our severely flawed system. Without this our uphill battle will continue annually, if not monthly.

DCMS has a new Web page <http://www.dallas-cms.org/sgr.cfm> that has a plethora of resources for you. Contact information for U.S. representatives and senators is listed, plus talking points to guide you.

It is critical that you let your congressmen know your opinions. Year after year of Band-Aids do NOT heal the patient—we need a permanent solution.

Stephen Ozanne, MD
DCMS President