



I am writing on behalf of the Dallas County Medical Society. As a physician leader and advocate for my patients, it is my duty to address the faulty Medicare physician payment system. Many of our Dallas physicians have been advocating with our politicians for many years on this problem.

In less than a week a short-term Medicare physician payment freeze will expire and a 21.2 percent cut to Medicare reimbursement rates will take effect. Most physician practices here and across the nation are small businesses. Those physicians who still care for Medicare patients will be faced with a severe financial strain. They will also have to choose whether or not they can still see Medicare patients. Bottom line, Medicare patients will have even greater difficulty finding a doctor.

Congress must cease the short-term “fixes” and address the actual problem, the flawed sustainable growth rate formula (SGR). If Congress had fixed this problem in 2005, when physicians faced a cut of about 3.3 percent, the cost of permanent reform would have been \$49 billion. Now, this year’s projected 21.2 percent cut yields a \$210 Billion price tag for reform.

Another short-term fix, or plan of action, only slightly delays the inevitable problem and makes it extremely difficult for physicians to continue their care for seniors and military families. Our patients deserve better. Our physicians deserve better. Congress needs to address this problem now.

It’s time to repeal the Medicare SGR formula, replacing it with a system that ensures payments keep pace with the rising costs associated with the care we provide for our patients.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Ozanne', is written over a large, light blue circular stamp or watermark.

Stephen Ozanne, MD
President, Dallas County Medical Society
