

MEDICARE OUTPATIENT THERAPY CAP

ACTION

Tell Congress to support the Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Services Act of 2017 (S. 253/H.R. 807). This legislation would repeal the Medicare outpatient therapy cap and ensure that Medicare patients continue to have access to medically necessary speech-language pathology, occupational therapy, and physical therapy services.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW?

In 2015, President Obama signed the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act into law. The law directs the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to continue to allow exceptions to therapy caps for medically necessary services provided through December 31, 2017. The therapy cap exceptions process requires reauthorization annually and historically been achieved within payment, tax, or fiscal related legislation.

WHAT YOU NEED TO SAY?

- This year marks the 20th anniversary of the implementation of the Medicare outpatient therapy cap.
- Since the enactment of this policy, Congress has stopped the “hard cap” on services by implementing several temporary moratoria and exceptions processes.
- While the yearly patches allow access to services, the yearly expiration causes uncertainty of care for both therapy providers and recipients to ensure high-quality ongoing treatment.
- For 2017, the therapy cap is \$1,980 for speech-language pathology and physical therapy services combined.
- The therapy cap does not take into account the medical needs of the beneficiary.
- Under the cap, Medicare beneficiaries who suffer from speech-language disorders due to life altering events—such as a stroke, head injury, Alzheimer's, or Parkinson's disease—risk being denied therapy and/or forced to pay out-of-pocket for services to help them regain their ability to communicate effectively.
- Repealing the Medicare therapy cap would ensure high-quality, ongoing treatment and remove the uncertainty of care for both therapy providers and recipients.

If your House member and/or Senator were cosponsors of the bill during the last session and is not a current cosponsor, please request that he/she sign on as soon as possible. If the member is new to Congress, or for some other reason has never signed onto the bill, this is an excellent opportunity to get him/her to do so.

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