

SGR Talking Points

Following are talking points for your use in communicating with local newspapers and news radio station. The point to communicate is that Congress has failed to pass a fix of the sustainable growth rate formula and that jeopardizes the stability of the Medicare program and affects your ability to treat Medicare patients.

- Congress has failed to pass legislation halting the 21 percent cut in Medicare physician payments; as a result, the cut went into effect on June 1.
- Temporary SGR fixes have served to exacerbate the Medicare physician payment crisis that has physicians scheduled for more than 40 percent in cuts, with negative and far-reaching impact on providers, patients and the health care delivery system
- Failure to permanently repeal the SGR and replacing it with a fair Medicare physician reimbursement formula impacts the long-term viability of ophthalmology practices and the ability to continue employing staff, purchasing updated equipment and other challenges small businesses face providing quality medical and surgical care to patients
- The instability and uncertainty of the Medicare payment system will make it impossible for some ophthalmologists in the long term to provide the care and access that our patients deserve
- If a permanent solution to Medicare physician payment is not addressed, the cost of serving Medicare patients will exceed reimbursement levels, which may lead practices to:
 - Limit the number of Medicare patients that are seen each week
 - Stop accepting new Medicare patients
 - Impose hiring freezes, cut staff hours and/or lay off employees
 - Forgo investments in updated equipment and technology
- Today physicians are paid at essentially 2001 rates under the Medicare program. Further disruptive payment cuts cannot be sustained