
Home Health Planning Improvement Act

Congress should enact the bipartisan Home Health Care Planning Improvement Act (S.227; H.R.3506) that would allow Nurse Practitioners (NP) and Physician Assistants (PA) to certify and make changes to home health plans of treatment.

- NPs and PAs are playing an increasing role in the delivery of our nation's health care, especially in rural and other underserved areas.
- Medicare reimburses NPs and PAs for providing physician services to Medicare patients.
- NPs and PAs can certify Medicare eligibility for skilled nursing facility services, but not more cost effective care in the home.

Ensure Appropriate and Adequate Reimbursement for Medicare Home Health Services

Fifty-three percent of home health agencies are projected to be paid less than their costs by Medicare in 2012. Congress should

- a)** amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) (H.R.3590; P.L.111-148) to require that home health rate rebasing include all usual and customary business costs consistent with standards under the Internal Revenue Code, including telehealth services, all disciplines of caregivers, and usual business operating expenses along with needs for operating capital and operating margins;
- b)** block CMS regulatory case mix adjustment payment cuts and require a new process for calculating case mix adjustments as set forth in the Home Health Care Access Protection Act (S.659); and
- c)** ensure full market basket updates to Medicare home health payments.

Fostering Independence Through Technologies Act

Congress should enact the Fostering Independence Through Technology (FITT) Act (S.501) that would establish pilot projects to provide support for home health agencies to use home monitoring and communications technologies to enhance health outcomes for Medicare beneficiaries and reduce Medicare expenditures. This bipartisan, budget neutral legislation would provide incentive payments to participating home health agencies equal to a portion of the Medicare savings achieved.

- Telehealth is defined by HRSA as "the use of technology to deliver health care, health information or health education at a distance."
- Telehealth has many different uses, but all help patients manage their own care, whether through remote vital signs monitoring, medication adherence, health coaching or otherwise.

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