

## **Medicare Regulatory Relief**

The pace of change in all four settings of post-acute care (PAC) presents significant challenges for physical medicine and rehabilitation (PMR) physicians and the PAC providers in which they practice. Alternative payment and delivery models, mandatory bundling initiatives, documentation requirements, and quality improvement activities impose significant regulatory burdens on PAC physicians, primarily PMR specialists. AAPM&R believes Congress has an opportunity to significantly lessen regulatory burdens on physicians practicing in PAC settings by pursuing the following regulatory relief proposals:

- **Reducing Burden of Technical Denials:** Congress should clarify that Medicare's documentation requirements in the inpatient rehabilitation hospital setting should have some degree of flexibility in order to eliminate burdensome Medicare denials of medically necessary care due to technical documentation deficiencies.
- **Repeal Medicare Outpatient Therapy Caps:** We have long supported the argument that therapy caps are completely arbitrary and harm beneficiaries most in need of rehabilitation. AAPM&R believes that outpatient therapy services should be administered in the best interests of patients needing rehabilitation, rather than based on arbitrary limitations on coverage. We wholeheartedly support and urge Congress to co-sponsor the *Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Services Act of 2017*, the outpatient therapy services cap repeal legislation introduced in both the House (H.R. 807) and Senate (S. 253).
- **Support H.R. 626, the Access to Inpatient Rehabilitation Therapy Act of 2017.** This legislation would permit inpatient rehabilitation hospitals and units to count recreational therapy services toward the 3-Hour intensity of therapy requirement. This would return to the physician and the rehabilitation team the discretion to prescribe the mix of therapy services that best meets the patient's needs without arbitrary regulatory restrictions. The proposal is not expected to have a major budget impact.

**AAPM&R urges Congress to support these policy proposals, which lessen regulatory burdens on physicians and thereby help enhance patient access to care.**

**For more information, contact:**

Paul Smedberg, Director, Advocacy & Government Affairs, AAPM&R  
(202) 420-5907 or [psmedberg@aapmr.org](mailto:psmedberg@aapmr.org)