

The Medicare Therapy Cap – You Can Make a Difference!

Your physical therapists (PT) and the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) are lobbying Congress to make sure that the therapy services you receive remain covered by Medicare. As Congress continues its attempts to rein in Medicare costs, it is important for you to join in the fight and let your voice be heard on Capitol Hill! You can help protect your physical therapy benefits by **telling your local U.S. Congressman and U.S. Senators to pass legislation to extend the Medicare therapy cap exceptions process beyond February 29, 2012.**

Background:

The Medicare therapy cap discriminates against Medicare beneficiaries who need care the most. The therapy cap is a financial limit that has been placed on the amount of therapy services Medicare will cover. In 2012, it caps coverage of outpatient rehabilitation services to \$1,880 for physical therapy and speech language pathology services and \$1,880 for occupational therapy services. Not all patients will exceed the cap, but Medicare beneficiaries who suffer from a stroke, have Parkinson's disease, osteoporosis or multiple instances of care are very likely to need more treatment than the cap permits. It is not fair to force those who need care the most to choose between paying out of pocket for care, traveling to an outpatient hospital setting, or the most likely scenario; forgoing care all together.

Congress has recognized the problem with the cap on therapy services in the past. Since the therapy caps were passed by Congress in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, Congress has passed several moratoriums to keep the therapy caps from going into effect and harming Medicare beneficiaries. On December 15, 2010 President Obama signed Senate Amendment to HR 4994, the "Medicare and Medicaid Extenders Act of 2010" which included an extension to the Medicare therapy cap exceptions process until December 31, 2011. In last minute legislation at the end of 2011, Congress passed a short term 2 month fix, which expires on February 29, 2012. **Congress needs to provide a more long term solution and protect Medicare beneficiaries by extending the exceptions process beyond February 29, 2012 or completely repealing the cap (H.R. 1546/S. 829).**

What You Can Do:

It is important that you send a strong message to your Members of Congress and **request that they pass legislation to extend the Medicare therapy cap exceptions process beyond February 29, 2012!**

- **Call your Members of Congress TODAY.** To reach your Member of Congress, contact the Capitol switchboard at 202/224-3121. Ask the operator to direct you to your Member of Congress.
 - **Ask your member of congress to sign onto the Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Services Act of 2011 (H.R. 1546/S. 829) which repeals the therapy cap once and for all.**
- **Utilize APTA's [Patient Action Center](http://www.apta.org/PatientActionCenter) (www.apta.org/PatientActionCenter) to send an e-mail or letter to your Members of Congress TODAY.** For sample letters and easy access to contacting your Members of Congress by electronic means or download and print letters visit the Action Center.