

PCPCC Congratulates the House for Repealing SGR, Urges Senate to Take Action

Statement from PCPCC Chief Executive Officer Marci Nielsen

WASHINGTON - The Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative (PCPCC) congratulates the House of Representatives for passing the SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2015 (HR 1470). Today's vote was an incredible sign of bipartisanship, with 397 members voting in favor of the bill. Now, we urge the Senate to follow the House's lead to officially repeal SGR and transition to a new dual system intended to reward quality of care. After 17 patches in 12 years, it is time to stabilize Medicare physician payment system and provide health security to the most vulnerable members of the population.

This historic legislation marks numerous accomplishments. First, it will end the disruptive last minute "fixes" that threaten deep cuts to physician reimbursement year after year. Next, the bill replaces the SGR with a new dual reimbursement system under which physician practices could choose to participate in either a Merit-Based Incentive Payment system linking better overall performance to higher reimbursement, or an "Alternative Payment Model" (APM) system under which practices would move away from traditional fee-for-service payments toward value-based payment.

Since the inception of the PCPCC, we have been aligning our stakeholders to promote sustainable payment for advanced primary care models, such as the patient-centered medical home (PCMH). As a long-time supporter of value-based reimbursement, we are pleased to see the legislation recognize the PCMH as an APM method for improving access to continuous, coordinated, and patient-centered primary care. The bill also provides support to primary care practices as they redesign their care delivery models to support valued-based services and meaningful partnerships with patients and families that help them achieve their health goals.

Finally, the legislation provides continued support for other important programs. It reauthorizes the Children's Health Insurance Program to ensure the continued health care coverage of low-income children, and extends the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education Program that provides care to patients in underserved areas by training primary care physicians in community-based settings. Both were set to expire in September. It also extends funding for Community Health Centers for two years.

As a leading advocate for advanced primary care and the PCMH, we appreciate the House's action to repeal the flawed SGR formula and applaud the White House for signaling their support of this historic, bipartisan legislation. We urge the Senate to act quickly to pass this bill by replacing it with a fair and stable Medicare physician payment system that builds on private and public sector initiatives that move America toward comprehensive payment reform.

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About the Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative (PCPCC): Founded in 2006, the PCPCC is dedicated to advancing an effective and efficient health care system built on a strong foundation of primary care and the patient-centered medical home (PCMH). The PCPCC achieves its mission through the work of its five Stakeholder Centers, experts and thought leaders focused on key issues of delivery reform, payment reform, patient engagement, and employer benefit redesign to drive health system transformation. For more information, visit www.pcpcc.org.