



SEP - 6 2019

*Administrator*  
Washington, DC 20201

The Honorable Ben Ray Luján  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Luján:

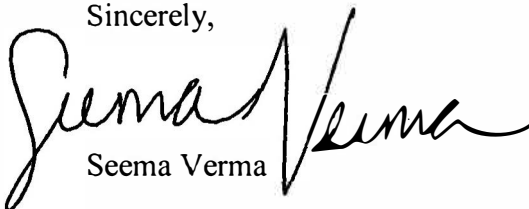
Thank you for your letter seeking data on the current volume of outpatient physical therapy services furnished by physical therapists in a health professional shortage area, medically underserved area, or rural area billed under a reciprocal billing arrangement. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services appreciates hearing your comments on this important issue.

Under section 16006 of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures Act, a Medicare-enrolled physical therapist may use a substitute physical therapist to furnish outpatient physical therapy services in a health professional shortage area, a medically underserved area, or a rural area under a reciprocal billing arrangement on or after June 13, 2017. For the calendar year 2018, there were 219 physical therapists in private practice who billed substitute services with the appropriate modifier on Medicare claims. There were 2,465 beneficiaries receiving such services from these substitute therapists, totaling \$935,495 in Medicare allowed charges.

Since Medicare payment is currently not made for substitute physical therapist services furnished outside current statutory guidelines, we do not have data or estimates regarding how many beneficiaries would benefit from providing the policy nationwide.

I appreciate your interest in this important issue as we work toward our mutual goal of strengthening the Medicare program for all beneficiaries. I will also provide this response to the co-signer of your letter.

Sincerely,



Seema Verma