

Private Practice Physical Therapists

Small business professionals restoring function to America - one patient at a time.

SUPPORT PHYSICAL THERAPISTS as SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS PROVIDING ACCESS TO COMMUNITY-BASED CARE

RECOMMENDATION

The Private Practice Section (PPS) of the APTA urges Congress to treat the *Supporting Medicare Providers Act* ([H.R. 6020](#)) as a must-pass bill before December 31, 2021. This legislation provides a crucial 1-year reprieve from CMS cuts that are to go into effect on January 1, 2022.

BACKGROUND

The current Medicare payment system does not adequately incentivize high-quality care, and reimbursement has failed to keep up with inflation. Furthermore, via rulemaking in the 2021 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (PFS) CMS cut payment to a large number of providers in order to increase payment for Evaluation and Management (E/M) codes. These cuts began in January 2021, and are to be spread across a number of years. Last December, Congress intervened and passed legislation to provide support in the form of a 3.75% payment adjustment for one year—2021.

Unfortunately, this temporary reprieve did not address the ongoing structural problems with the PFS and the provider community is bracing for another round of cuts which are set to begin in 2022. Drastic cuts at this time could result in many beneficiaries losing timely access to essential health care services.

This October, 245 members of the House of Representatives signed a [letter](#) which urged Congressional action to avert the January 2022 payment cut that, combined with other statutorily required cuts, could drop provider payments by as much as 9%. The letter also pointed out that unless Congress intervenes, “the profound exhaustion from the pandemic combined with stress of uncertainty in payments may lead to further retirements, office closures, or reduced staffing, ultimately limiting patient access to care.” To avoid this scenario, **Congress must act before the end of the year to extend the 3.75% payment adjustment through at least CY 2022.**

PREVENT STEEP CUTS TO PHYSICAL THERAPY IN 2022

Millions of seniors rely on the Medicare program and Congress must work to ensure it remains a robust and dependable option for those who need it the most. PPS urges Congress to **make critical investment in the nation’s health care delivery system and to address the imminent cuts to Medicare payments by extending the 3.75% payment adjustment through at least CY 2022.** Maintaining this level of funding will provide much-needed stability for private practice physical therapists, physicians, and other non-physician providers, as well as their patients as the nation works to emerge from COVID-19’s devastating impact on the economy as well as access to care.

PPS believes that Congress must pass the *Supporting Medicare Providers Act* ([H.R. 6020](#)) before the end of the year in order to preserve access to critical physical therapy care. Private practice physical therapists provide cost-effective, safe physical therapy in community-based settings. A 3.75% cut is likely to force PPS members to lay off vital staff, limit hours, or worse-yet close clinics permanently—significantly disrupting access to care as well as the local economy. To **cosponsor H.R.6020**, please contact Dylan Moore (dylan.moore@mail.house.gov) in Representative Larry Bucshon’s office.