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March 9, 2010

To LCMS Members:

It is time to stop complaining. ***It is time to act.***

The flawed SGR formula resulting in a **21% reduction in Medicare reimbursements** may again take affect on 4/1/2010. If enacted, this will dramatically change the way you practice medicine.

We here at the LCMS are working together with IPALC and LMHS to increase both physician and patient awareness on this critical issue. We are seeking a political solution.

To this goal, we need you to go to www.leecountymedicalsociety.org to download the following items:

- "Dear Patient" letter to be signed by you [Cover Letter to Patients Regarding SGR.doc]
- Form letters for your patients to be sent to Senators/Congressmen [Senator-Congressman Form Letters For Patients Regarding SGR.doc]
- AMA flyer

IPALC will also make these available on their homepage: <http://www.ipalc.org/>

It is essential that you provide these items to your patients as soon as possible.

If you do not have access to a computer, these have also been added to this letter.

We are also asking that you contact your representatives:

<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/health-system-reform/peal-medicare-sgr.shtml>

This link will be available on the LCMS & IPALC webpages listed above.

Our message is simple:

1. A decrease of reimbursements by 21% will have a catastrophic affect on the local economy.
2. Neither the AMA nor the FMA will accept any more temporary fixes to the SGR.
3. Congress corrected the SGR but the Senate did not. The Senate must fix it quickly and fairly.
4. Our seniors and military families deserve a stable Medicare program.
5. Reducing reimbursement will make it impossible for physicians to embrace proposed Health Information Technologies.
6. In the past eight years, Medicare reimbursement has increased only 1% while practice expenses have increased at least 22%. Further reimbursement reductions will make it impossible to provide adequate quality and access to medical care.

If you know anyone who is strongly considering dropping Medicare because of the threat of the reduced reimbursements, please let me know. We need to get these stories out to the media.

Please, it is time to act. If you have other ideas to tackle this together, please contact me.

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