



Physicians Caring for Texans

March 17, 2022

The Honorable Michael Burgess, MD
Room 2161 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Relief from Medicare Sequester payment cut needed before April 1, 2022

Dear Representative Burgess:

On behalf of the Texas Medical Association (TMA) and its more than 56,000 Texas physicians and medical student members, I write with concerns on the upcoming payment reductions to the Medicare conversion factor.

As you know, the bipartisan Protecting Medicare and American Farmers from Sequester Cuts Act authorized a three-month delay of a 2% Medicare sequester payment reduction from Jan. 1, 2022, through March 31, 2022.

TMA appreciates that Congress suspended these cuts in 2021 as doing so has allowed Texas physicians to continue serving their Medicare patients during the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE).

Unless Congress acts, Medicare participating physicians now face a 1% reduction in their payments due to the sequester starting April 1, 2022 through June 30, 2022. Further causing concern, an additional 2% payment reduction to the Medicare conversion factor is scheduled to occur on July 1, 2022.

Given that the PHE continues and financial margins of physician practices remain lean, TMA respectfully requests that Congress promptly extend the full 2% Medicare sequester moratorium for at least the duration of the PHE. TMA believes resuming Medicare sequester payment cuts on April 1, 2022, before the end of the PHE, will needlessly threaten Medicare beneficiaries' access to care. We request that Congress take action on this matter before April 1. Doing so would help ensure that Texas physicians treating Medicare patients have sufficient resources necessary to continue practicing medicine.

Furthermore, TMA is alarmed with the growing financial instability of the Medicare physician payment system. **We strongly urge Congress to establish a reliable Medicare physician payment update each year that keeps up with inflation and practice costs.**

We appreciate the opportunity to comment. If you have questions, please contact Clayton Stewart, TMA vice president of public affairs and chief lobbyist, at (512) 370-1365 or clayton.stewart@texmed.org.

Sincerely,

E. Linda Villarreal, MD
President
Texas Medical Association