



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
PLASTIC SURGEONS®



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FOUNDATION™

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October 23, 2020

The Honorable Seema Verma
Administrator
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
200 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Administrator Verma:

We write to urge you to take all steps available to prevent the currently estimated 10.6 percent reductions in the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS) conversion factor that are scheduled to take place on January 1, 2021. In particular, we urge you to work with Congress to waive budget neutrality requirements for the MPFS and to implement positive payment updates for 2021 and 2022, in order to ensure that physicians like me receive sufficient payment to keep our practices afloat, particularly as we also deal with the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

We are very concerned to see the impact of the MPFS proposed rule. Without immediate action, plastic surgeons are expected to see a 7 percent reimbursement cut in their payments under the MPFS next year. Physicians across multiple specialties are also expected to see similar cuts unless Congress and CMS take swift action.

If these new cuts go into effect, there will be devastating consequences for physicians, like us, and our patients. Physicians are already under serious financial distress as a result of the COVID-19 public health crisis, and slashing our Medicare payments will only make that worse. CMS should work with Congress to prevent budget neutrality reductions and instead implement positive payment updates that reflect the continually increasing costs of providing care to patients. Otherwise, we fear that the expected payment reductions will encourage more physicians to limit or stop their participation in Medicare, which will result in reduced patient access to specialty care. For these reasons, we urge you to work with Congress to enact a waiver of budget neutrality requirements and to implement positive Medicare payment updates for the MPFS in 2021 and 2022.

In addition, we urge CMS to apply the 2021 increases in values for office and outpatient evaluation and management (E/M) services to the pre- and post-service work included in 10- and 90-day global codes. The failure of CMS to implement this important policy not only disregards precedent but is a direct attack on the relativity of services under the MPFS.

Thank you for your consideration of my thoughts on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact Patrick Hermes, Director of Advocacy and Government Relations, at phermes@plasticsurgery.org or (847) 228-3331 to request any additional information or with any questions.

Sincerely,

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