

IMMEDIATE ACTION NEEDED

AAHomecare has a link on their website to document complaints that patients are having working with Contracted Suppliers under the new program. We encourage all providers to participate in this endeavor

[CLICK for AAHomecare's Feedback Form](#)

Competitive Bidding has begun. It may be stopped when the Senate votes on H.R. 6331, after the July 4th recess. We ask to please continue to have your patients and everyone involved ask the Senators for their support of H.R. 6331. Senators can be reached by looking up their local, state offices at www.senate.gov. You are also encouraged to send fax letters as well.

- ACCP Mission: Stop Physician Cuts, Stop Competitive Bidding

- Doctors Encouraged to Contact Senators

- Hurricane Bertha Poses Questions about Unlicensed Providers

ACCP Mission: Stop Physician Cuts, Stop Competitive Bidding

In an ACTION ALERT released last week, the American College of Chest Physicians (ACCP) encouraged their members to speak to Senators about stopping physician cuts, Competitive Bidding and the payment cap on oxygen rentals.

The message on their website states:

Last week, the Senate came one vote short of the 60 votes needed to invoke cloture and proceed to the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (H.R. 6331). The House

passed H.R. 6331 with overwhelming bipartisan support earlier in the week.

As you may know, H.R. 6331 includes a number of important provisions, including:

- Stops the 10.6% cut starting July 1, 2008, and a further 5% cut in 2009 Medicare physician payments and replaces it with a 0.5% update for the rest of 2008 and a 1.1% update for 2009;

- Creates a national coverage policy for pulmonary rehabilitation;

- Delays the expansion of competitive bidding for durable medical equipment;

and

- Repeals the mandated title transfer for oxygen equipment.

Because Congress failed to pass legislation to prevent the July 1 cuts, Medicare carriers will be required to apply a 10.6% cut on all services performed after that date, unless Congress returns and passes a bill that averts the cuts retroactive to July 1.

By law, claims are not paid for 14 days after receipt, so there is a short opportunity for carriers to hold up processing in the hope that Congress, upon its return from the July 4 recess, will take immediate action to avert the cuts retroactive to July 1.

Consequently, we are imploring Congress, in the strongest terms, to pass legislation early in the

week of July 7. Please help us by urging your Senators, while they are home over the July 4 recess, to swiftly enact H.R. 6331 immediately upon their return to Washington. We encourage your patients to deliver the same message to their Senators, as well.

Thank you to those of you who have already.

[CLICK for Link to ACCP Action Alert](#)

Doctors Encouraged to Contact Senators **By Rob Brant, President**

Last week AMEPA Members, armed with a copy of the above ACCP letter, met with Pulmonologist, Critical Care Physicians, Cardiologists and Internists, and encouraged them to follow the ACCPs request. The ACCP Action Alert was highlighted to emphasize the fact that we are fighting to achieve the same goal.

Most doctors were educated about the issue and some even suggested that Bid Winners fighting to save Competitive Bidding were as bad as the Senators who voted against H.R. 6331. Some doctors had signs and flyers in their Waiting Rooms encouraging patients to call their Senators

Unfortunately, most physicians have not yet called their Senators due to time constraints and the fact that they did not have the phone number right in front of them. Thursday in front of a doctor, I picked up his office phone and called the **Capitol Hill Switchboard - (202) 224-3121**. The switchboard operator picked up the phone after one ring and instantly connected me to Senator Mel Martinez's (R-FL) office. The doctor smiled, almost embarrassed that he did not call earlier. Other doctors faxed and emailed letters to their Senators

encouraging them to pass H.R. 6331 and detailed problems that they are having with Competitive Bidding Program.

We provided the doctors with the phone numbers and email addresses of Senators, **provided by VGM** . |
encourage all providers to take the same action

[CLICK for Link to VGM's Senate Information Page](#)

Hurricane Bertha Poses Questions about Unlicensed Providers

Written by Rob Brant

