



Physicians Caring for Texans

TMA STATEMENT — FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Feb. 26, 2010

Countdown to Medicare Meltdown: Day 3

The following can be attributed to William H. Fleming III, MD, president of the Texas Medical Association. Dr. Fleming says Medicare patients should know that just three days from the deadline, there still is no real action to stop the Medicare physician payment cuts slated for Monday, March 1, 2010.

“Confusion continues to grow as to what Congress is doing to fix the 21.2-percent cut to physicians’ Medicare payments on March 1. Here’s what every Medicare patient needs to know: Congress has yet to pass a bill to stop the cut or to come up with a long-term solution for the Medicare program. So now we are only three days away from the Medicare Meltdown.

“The only idea Congress keeps kicking around is to extend the deadline another 30 days, which is the same thing that Congress has done for the past decade — put off the problem. Our elderly, disabled, and military patients deserve a better solution. We all deserve a better solution. Without a permanent solution to Medicare’s faulty formula used to pay physicians, the cuts grow deeper each year. In the next few years, physicians could see a cut as deep as 40 percent.

“If Congress and President Obama truly want health system reform, they must fix the Medicare system. We need a rational Medicare physician payment system that automatically keeps up with the cost of running a practice and is backed by a fair, stable funding formula.”

TMA is the largest state medical society in the nation, representing nearly 45,000 physician and medical student members. It is located in Austin and has 120 component county medical societies around the state. TMA’s key objective since 1853 is to improve the health of all Texans.

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Contact: Pam Udall (512) 370-1382; cell: (512) 413-6807; e-mail: pam.udall@texmed.org
Brent Annear (512) 370-1381; cell: (512) 656-7320; e-mail: brent.annear@texmed.org

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