



## Radiology Views™ Special Newsletter – November 2011

### HELP STOP THE 25% MULTIPLE PROCEDURE REDUCTION TO THE PROFESSIONAL COMPONENT

#### **What is the issue?**

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is planning on applying a 25% multiple procedure reduction (MPPR) to the professional component of diagnostic imaging services administered to the same patient, during the same session and this would apply to all physicians within a practice.

#### **What is the reason?**

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) decision is rooted in the incorrect assumption that there are considerable efficiencies when radiologists interpret successive imaging studies. But, there is no publicly available evidence to support a 25% reduction. In the September 2011 JACR article stated in the conclusion: "Although potential efficiencies in physician work occur when multiple services are provided to the same patient during the same session, these are highly variable and considerably less than previously estimated."

#### **What you can do:**

John A. Patti, MD, FACR, Chairman, ACR Board of Chancellors is recommending that you call and write Congressman Timothy Ryan to request co-sponsorship of H.R. 3269. This legislation would stop CMS from applying the 25% multiple procedure reduction to the professional component of diagnostic imaging services administered to the same patient, during the same session and would apply to all physicians within a practice. This bill will block the implementation of this reimbursement reduction.

#### **How to do it?**

Contact Congressman Timothy Ryan to request co-sponsorship of H.R. 3269:

Phone (202) 225-5261

Fax (202) 225-3719

Email by using Timothy Ryan's website at <http://timryan.house.gov/>

On the next page, you will find a template letter provided by John A. Patti, MD, FACR, Chairman of the ACR Board of Chancellors for radiologists and other health care personnel to personalize and send to Members of Congress urging cosponsorship of H.R. 3269. Please take a moment to customize, sign, and send the attached letter to Representative Tim Ryan.

Once you have sent the letter, the American College of Radiology has asked that you email Melody Ballesteros, [mballesteros@acr.org](mailto:mballesteros@acr.org), to confirm to that you have completed the outreach to Congressman Ryan. In the subject line, please type "Contacted Representative Tim Ryan" as it will help ACR's Government Relations office follow-up on your behalf.



November XX, 2011

Representative **FIRST NAME LAST NAME**

United States House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative **Last name:**

As a constituent radiologist practicing in **City, State**, I urge you to cosponsor H.R. 3269, the Diagnostic Imaging Services Access Protection Act of 2011. This legislation would block CMS from imposing a 25 percent payment reduction (MPPR) to the professional interpretation of advanced diagnostic imaging services for multiple imaging studies administered to the same patient, by physicians in the same practice setting, on the same day.

The CMS policy is rooted in the incorrect assumption that there are considerable efficiencies when radiologists interpret successive imaging studies during a single patient visit. However, radiologists are morally and professionally obligated to expend an equal amount of time, effort and skill on interpreting images, regardless of whether or not an additional examination has been performed on the same day. In fact, whatever efficiencies that do exist are minimal and vary by modality of the imaging study. A peer-reviewed expert panel found that these efficiencies range from 2.96 % to 5.45%. A far cry from the 25% cut found in the CMS policy.

The most egregious aspect of this policy is that it has been greatly expanded from this summer's Proposed Rule, and legislation is now required to correct this over-reach. CMS is now extending this payment reduction to separate physicians in the same practice who interpret different exams on the same patient, in the same day.

As a physician who specializes in diagnosing both life threatening diseases and patient trauma, I am deeply troubled by CMS's latest attempt to grossly undervalue the role of radiologists within the health care delivery process. Clinical settings where patients require multiple examinations on the same day include severe trauma, cancer diagnosis and follow-up and stroke, making the overall medical complexity of patients requiring multiple examinations typically greater than patients requiring single examinations.

In conclusion, it is imperative that Congress pass HR 3269 to prevent CMS from implementing this unwarranted regulatory over-reach. **I request you strongly consider becoming a cosponsor of H.R. 3269.** Should you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me either via phone, **XXX-XXX-XXXX**, or email, **[firstname.lastname@emailaddress.com](mailto:firstname.lastname@emailaddress.com)**, and I will be happy to lend my expertise.

Sincerely,

**First Name Last Name**, MD, FACR (if applicable)