



Feb. 14, 2004

Print *Advocacy Weekly* in PDF Form

[Newsletter Archive](#)

IMAGING

- *Imaging Coalition Keeps Focus on Patients*

REIMBURSEMENT

- *Congress Evaluates Medicare Reimbursement*

MEDICAL LIABILITY REFORM

- *Alliance Testifies on Medical Liability Reform*

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

- *ACC '05 Session Aims to Save 100K Lives*

LEGISLATIVE/REGULATORY

- *Medicare Drug Benefit Price Tag Soars to \$720 Billion*
- *FDA Alerts – Syringes and ADD Drug*
- *ACC PAC Hosts Rep. Tom Price at ACC '05 Event*

IMAGING

Imaging Coalition Keeps Focus on Patients

Reinforcing medical imaging's designation as one of the "top 11" medical innovations of the past 1,000 years, the Coalition for Patient-Centered Imaging (CPCI), formerly called Physicians for Patient-Centered Imaging, delivered a formal statement to the House Ways and Means Health Subcommittee on Feb. 10. The coalition emphasized the value of imaging tests performed by qualified physicians, regardless of specialty designation. The [CPCI press release](#) and [statement](#) are available online.

The release of the statement coincided with testimony delivered by Glenn Hackbarth, chairman of the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC). In his testimony, Hackbarth outlined recommendations on ways to control the utilization of medical imaging that will be included in MedPAC's March report to Congress.

REIMBURSEMENT

Congress Evaluates Medicare Reimbursement

The House Ways and Means Health Subcommittee convened last Thursday to discuss possible solutions to problems with the current Medicare physician payment system. Acknowledging that the current reimbursement system is "unsustainable," Subcommittee Chairman Nancy Johnson, R-Conn., called the hearing to explore alternative payment systems, such as paying for quality and efficiency — also referred to as pay-for-performance. Johnson is expected to propose a "pay-for-reporting" initiative as early as January 2006 with the idea that physicians will begin to build an infrastructure for reporting on quality measures. [Click here](#) to view testimonies and a transcript from this hearing.

The [Alliance of Specialty Medicine](#) testified with their recommendations for fixing the current reimbursement formula and cautioned members of Congress about implementing proposed pay-for-performance measures as a purely cost-saving initiative or substitute for revising the sustained growth rate formula. The [Alliance's testimony](#) and [press release](#) are now available online.

MEDICAL LIABILITY REFORM

Alliance Testifies on Medical Liability Reform

On Feb. 10, the [Alliance testified](#) at a House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee hearing on medical liability reform. Giving state-by-state examples of the impact of skyrocketing medical liability insurance rates on

physician practice and patients' access to care, the Alliance asked members of Congress to pass meaningful liability reform with limits on non-economic damages.

In related news, Sen. John Ensign, R-Nev., introduced the Help Efficient, Accessible, Low-Cost, Timely Healthcare (HEALTH) Act that caps awards for non-economic damages in medical liability cases at \$250,000. Similar legislation was introduced by the House earlier this month.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

ACC '05 Session Aims to Save 100K Lives

Learn how you can become a part of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's [Save 100,000 Lives Campaign](#) at ACC '05. The March 6 session will examine the evidence behind each of the Campaign's six proposed interventions, with special focus on those relating to acute myocardial infarction care. Participants will also discuss the theory behind reliable implementation of evidenced-based guidelines. [Click here](#) to learn more.

LEGISLATIVE/REGULATORY

Medicare Drug Benefit Price Tag Soars to \$724 Billion

Estimates for the drug benefit scheduled to become a part of Medicare in 2006 continue to rise as the White House released revised figures for the program last week. In his 2003 State of the Union, President Bush vowed to keep the Medicare drug benefit below \$400 billion between 2004 and 2013. The most recent estimates price the drug benefit at \$724 billion between 2006 and 2015. The new estimates have sparked congressional concern, and Republican and Democratic lawmakers are calling for a re-examination of the Medicare prescription drug law and possible legislation to scale back the benefit program.

FDA Recalls Syringes, Monitors ADHD Drug

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently renewed its alert against the use of all lots of preloaded syringes containing either heparin or sodium chloride intravenous catheter flushes manufactured by the IV Flush, LLC and distributed by Pinnacle Medical Supply, of Rowlett, Texas due to potential contamination. [Click here](#) for more information on this nationwide alert.

After the Canadian government suspended the sale of the attention deficit hyperactivity disorder drug Adderall, the FDA [released a statement](#) affirming its current labeling and usage instructions. Recent reports show that Adderall was linked to 20 sudden deaths and a dozen strokes.

ACC PAC Hosts Rep. Tom Price at ACC '05 Event

The ACC PAC is boosting its 2005 fundraising efforts with a special dinner at ACC '05 featuring guest speaker Rep. Tom Price, R-Ga. The ACC PAC was instrumental in helping elect Price, an orthopaedic surgeon, to represent Georgia's sixth congressional district. Talk show host Larry King, who is receiving the Presidential Citation award at ACC '05, will also be attending the March 6 dinner. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Questions? Comments? Send your feedback to epubs@acc.org and include the name of the publication in the subject line.
