

FSIPP NEWSLETTER

SUMMER, 2008

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: DEBORAH H. TRACY, MD

President's Message Greetings to All

Lora Brown, MD



As you are aware on Thursday, July 19th HR 6331 was successfully passed in the House and Senate therefore avoiding the 10.6% cuts. We must thank thousands of patients and physicians who called their legislators to support HR 6331 and ASIPP for their unrelenting persistence. We have 18 months to continue at our current level of reimbursement, but then the battle will begin again. We need each and every one of you to get involved to continue preserving the practice of medicine. Please see our article in this issue of the Newsletter further commenting on the potential cuts.

WE ARE CLOSER THAN EVER BEFORE!!

Lives in Florida will be saved with the creation of a Patient Drug Monitoring Program, PDMP (**FLASPER**).

I have recently returned from the FMA legislative counsel meeting where the counsel voted to make the creation of a Florida Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (AKA FLASPER) a legislative PRIORITY for 2009. This is huge. It means that the FMA, for the first time, endorses and is willing to commit money and lobby effort to this cause. In addition, several Florida medical specialties have joined forces with FSIPP including the FAPM, FSPMR, FSAM, FOS, and FSA, to cosponsor a resolution in support of FLASPER. As you know, a Florida PDMP would provide all physicians a tool that would be used to prevent doctor shopping, thereby providing liability protection to physicians as well as provide a database from which law enforcement would be able to access in order to save lives.

I encourage **ALL FSIPP MEMBERS** to attend this year's annual FAPM/FSIPP meeting. Exciting events this year include a Practice Enhancement Pre-conference Event organized by our own FSIPP Secretary Deborah Tracy, MD, MBA. This will surely add value to your practices as she has included up to the minute information regarding RAC Audits, OIG Audits, Compliance, Partnerships, Patient Quality Reporting Initiative, PQRI and the application of Business Strategies to our medical practices. In keeping with the Conference Topic of Sacroiliac Joint Pain, FSIPP has also organized a pre-conference Hands-On Cadaver Workshop featuring two SI Joint Denervation Procedures. Simplicity (Neurotherm) and Synergy (Baylis) will each be featured. There will be an opportunity to experience both procedures in a non-biased format. I urge you to attend this outstanding opportunity to learn two new valuable procedures on Friday, Aug 1, at the FSIPP Pre-conference Event.

As you know, the FAPM/FSIPP Meeting marks the end of my leadership as FSIPP President and the beginning of a new era of leadership with my friend and colleague Harold Corder, MD. Elections will be held at the FSIPP Annual Meeting 5:15 PM, Saturday, August 2, 2008. The last two years have been a wonderful experience. I feel that we have made significant strides as an organization, but our work is not nearly complete. I look forward to continued involvement working in the interest of all interventional pain physicians and patients in the State of Florida.

Lora L. Brown, MD, DABIPP



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ASIPP/FSIPP DC TRIP

Medicare Cuts

**FSIPP Best Practices
Seminar with FAPM
Conference**

**HURRY - Earlybird
Registration has been
extended until July 25!**

Conference Brochure



Dr. Andrea Trescot, ASIPP President, Representative Vern Buchanan, District 13 (Sarasota, Manatee counties), Dr. Lora Brown, FSIPP President, and Dr. Jonathan Daitch, FSIPP Regional Director

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE ASIPP, FSIPP 2008, Washington, DC

Jonathan Daitch, MD

The National ASIPP conference on June 21-25, 2008, in Washington, DC, was a huge success with a large number of physician attendees. The Capitol Hill visits to our Senators and Representatives on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday will further promote an understanding in Congress regarding the issues facing medical care in the United States. Our physician leaders, FSIPP President Lora Brown, FSIPP President-elect Harold Cordner, FSIPP Past-President and ASIPP President Andrea Trescot, FSIPP Regional Director Jonathan Daitch, Dr. Nilesh Patel, and Dr. Manjul Derasari took time out of their practices to attend this crucial event on Capitol Hill.

Our leaders received presentations from 12 Senators and House Representatives supportive of our causes on Tuesday morning. On Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday our physicians lobbied 11 Senators and Representatives from Florida including Senator Bill Nelson. Each legislator acknowledged the need for urgent Medicare reform, the question is how to PAY for it.

As you are aware HR 6331 successfully passed through the House and Senate to avert the 10.6% cuts. FSIPP would like to thank all members who took their time to call their Legislators who received thousands of phone calls.

Our FSIPP leaders also lobbied against the ASC pay cuts which unfairly target ASC pain management procedures. Multilevel facets, multilevel RF, and additional level transforaminal injections will be cut by up to 71%. This will drive these cases out of the ASC and into the hospitals, leading to even greater cost to Medicare.

The final lobbying point was for NASPER. NASPER passed and was signed by President Bush in August of 2005, with provisions to monitor all scheduled prescriptions for patients on an interstate level. However, it was never funded! It is currently held up in the House/Senate Appropriations Committee, blocked by Hal Rogers, the Chairman of the Committee. Chairman Rogers supports a similar item/bill proposed by the Department of Justice that ASIPP and FSIPP have evaluated to be an inadequate substitute.

In summary our visit was amazing! I plan to go back each year to lobby for our specialty. I urge all of you to do this. If you cannot afford time away, you should donate to ASIPP PAC (Political Action Committee) to insure successful delivery our message. Forward your voice, ideas and concerns to ASIPP and or FSIPP to help solve any issues being addressed and become an active part of the solution!

Jonathan S. Daitch, MD
FSIPP, Regional Director



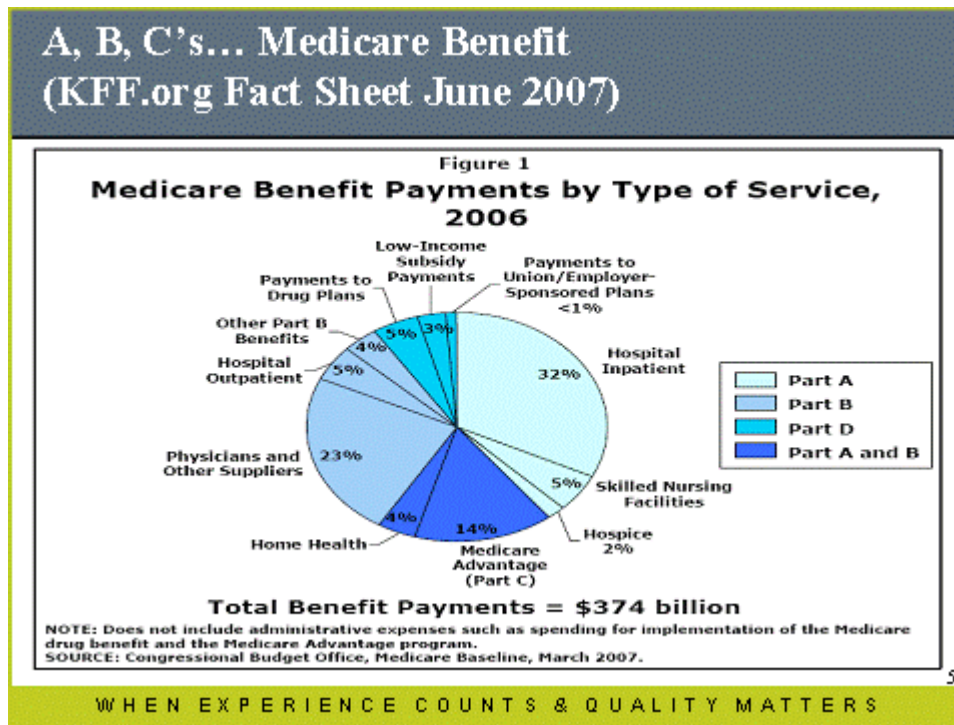
FSIPP Secretary Comments on the Reversal of the 10.6% Medicare Cuts!



Deborah H Tracy MD, MBA Editor-in-Chief FSIPP Newsletter

HR 6331 finally passed in the Senate but not without a struggle. The bill strongly supported in the House by an overwhelming bipartisan vote of 355 to 59 almost did not make it through the Senate. The bill delays the 10.6% Medicare cuts for 18 to 24 months and will be paid for by a 9.5% cut in medical equipment and oxygen and possibly rehabilitation programs. President Bush has threatened to veto the bill because it may also cut the Medicare Advantage program, Part C. Since the Senate passed HR 6331 with a vote of 69 to 30 that is greater than a two thirds majority, the vote is veto-proof.

Year after year physicians face threats of significant cuts and thankfully year after year these cuts are averted. These 10% cuts occur automatically because of a statutory formula that reduces Medicare payments to physicians because of a method that links reimbursement to the Sustained Growth Rate. The problem is that the Sustained Growth Rate is in no way a reflection of physicians' income and escalating expenses. Additionally, physicians receive a very small percentage of health care dollars. Below is a slide from a presentation given by Medicare. You can see that this pie chart demonstrates that physicians receive 23% of Part B Medicare dollars. However, Medicare has adjusted this piece to take out 'other suppliers' and the percentage of Medicare Part B to physicians then becomes 13%. This percentage includes expensive drugs that doctors provide in their offices such as Botulinum Toxin, Chemotherapeutic Agents, Procrit and others. Consequently, the Part B percentage of Medicare Health Care Dollars that goes to physicians could be calculated at less than 10%. See slide below.



A further piece of information from the pie chart indicates that Medicare Advantage, Part C, representing Medicare HMOs receives 14% of the pie. Apparently some of our Republican Senators and President Bush had serious concerns regarding potential cuts to these Part C programs. However, they don't have problems with Part C Administrators and CEOs receiving bonuses of millions and billions of dollars each year. My patients in HMOs wait days, weeks and months for authorizations for medical care and express that their program would rather see them dead than pay for their healthcare. These poor patients have expensive medications or no co-coverage therefore they are between a rock and a hard place.

Even with cuts averted the FMA has stated that doctors are leaving Florida, retiring early and seeking other opportunities. Unfortunately, it is the best doctors that are the first to go, secondary to the frustrations of increasing expenses and declining reimbursement, for some specialties it has become impossible to make ends meet. Most physicians work 12 hour days or more, take call and phone calls at night and perform rounds and consults on the weekends, while administrators of HMOs are becoming millionaires.

Future cuts to physician reimbursement will result in health care disaster in Florida in the coming years and while these across the board cuts have been averted we know that others methods of cutting reimbursement are alive and well.

Deborah H. Tracy, MD, MBA
Florida Society of Interventional Pain Physicians, Secretary of the Board of Directors
ABIPP, Board of Directors
Hernando County Medical Society, Pres-elect



The 2008 Conference and Annual Meeting of FSIPP & FAPM & FSPMR will be August 1 – 3, at the Gaylord Palms, Kissimmee.

Conference Brochure

Click above for full program details and for registration materials.
HURRY— Earlybird Registration has been extended until July 25!

Fantastic educational offerings:

- SIJ Hands-On Workshop with Leonard Kapural MD
- Regenerative Injection Therapy Hands-On Workshop with Felix Linetsky MD

FSIPP’s Best Practices Workshop (Surviving Audits, On Target Compliance, Partnership Agreements, Practice Analysis, PQRI - Bonus Your Practice, 10 Most Common Pain Procedures/LCDs and Proper Documentation for Medical Necessity)

- SI Joint Pain and What to Do with It** (Interventionalist Perspective, Cooled RF/Thermal RF, Orthopaedic Medicine/RIT Perspective)
- Advanced Topics in Neuromodulation
- Treatment of Osteoarthritis Pain
- Truth about Vertebral Augmentation: Vertebroplasty, Kyphoplasty, Sacroplasty
- RIT w/ Platelet-Rich Plasma
- Innovations in the Treatment of Discogenic Pain
- Biological Approach to Treatment of Discogenic Pain
- Medicare/Medicaid
- Opioid Prescribing and Diversion
- FL MedMal Update.

See you in Orlando!

For hotel reservations, call 407 586 0000, and tell them you’re with the Florida Academy of Pain Medicine. Although the roomrate of \$209 has technically expired, the Gaylord says they will honor this rate for FAPM as long as the hotel has availability.

WE’RE ON THE WEB!
FLSIPP.ORG

FSIPP NEWSLETTER

To Contact Us: info@flisipp.org