

**Linda Seidelman**

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**Subject:** What's Happening in Healthcare Today



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**Re:** What's Happening in Healthcare Today

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## **AMA, Others Urge CMS to Pay Overdue Reimbursements to Docs**

The American Medical Association (AMA), along with medical societies representing all 50 states, D.C., and 57 national medical specialty societies, called on the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to use the \$200 million allocated by Congress to provide physicians with long-overdue Medicare reimbursements for payments they should have received in 2010. The funds were part of the Medicare & Medicaid Extenders Act of 2010, which was passed last week by Congress.

"After weathering a year filled with uncertainties from continuous threats of cuts to Medicare payments, many physicians are not in a position to rely on IOUs from the government," said Cecil B. Wilson, M.D., AMA President. "This week Congress allocated \$200 million to help CMS comply with the new health reform law by reimbursing physicians for payments they should have received this

year under the Affordable Care Act. We urge CMS to provide physicians with prompt information about how these claims will be handled, and to make the reimbursement process as quick and simple as possible."

In a [letter](#) sent to HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, the organizations outlined the six provisions in the Affordable Care Act that called for physicians to be reimbursed at new payment levels. These provisions stated that the new levels would be retroactive and apply through all of 2010, including the months prior to the legislation's enactment. However, those payments were not processed and physicians are currently waiting to receive reimbursements from the first half of the year.

"These missing payments are having a real impact," said Dr. Wilson. "Seventy eight percent of office based physicians are in small practices. Waiting for these reimbursements can cause them particular hardship as they struggle to keep their practices viable and care for Medicare patients." ([Physicians News](#))

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