

Immediate Issues

Urge your legislators to take action on the following issues.

▶ **MITIGATING DRUG SHORTAGES**

Urge your legislators to support legislation to help identify critical drugs in short supply and give the FDA more authority and information to address the issue. Legislation should include:

- ▶ Early warning systems
- ▶ Streamlined FDA approval
- ▶ Improved communication
- ▶ Market incentives

▶ **KEY EXTENSIONS**

Several key programs that help ensure care is there in communities of all sizes have expired or are set to expire soon. Ask your legislators to support legislation to extend the following:

- ▶ Medicare-dependent hospital program
- ▶ Treatment of the technical component of physician pathology services
- ▶ Reasonable cost reimbursement for laboratory services in small, rural hospitals
- ▶ Hold-harmless for outpatient hospital payments
- ▶ Payment adjustment for low-volume hospitals
- ▶ Section 508 area wage index reclassifications
- ▶ Increase in payments for ambulance services
- ▶ Delay on full implementation of the “25% Rule” for all long-term care hospitals (LTCH)
- ▶ LTCH very short-stay outlier policy
- ▶ LTCH budget-neutrality adjustment
- ▶ Continued funding for Children’s Hospitals Graduate Medical Education

See issue papers for further details.

The Challenge of Access

Hospitals' ability to maintain the kind of access to care their patients and communities expect is threatened by repeated ratcheting of payments for Medicare and Medicaid hospital services.

Take this opportunity to lay a foundation with your legislators for the deficit debate sure to come after the election. We need to drive home the point that further cuts to Medicare and Medicaid funding for hospital services will only increase the challenges facing our field and could in turn limit Medicare and Medicaid patients' access to care.

▶ SET OUT THE CHALLENGE

Take a moment to paint a quick picture of your organization:

- ▶ the services you offer, both on the hospital campus and in the community
- ▶ how many people you treat on average
- ▶ how many people you employ

Share with them the tough challenges you face as you seek to ensure you can provide timely access to essential services and the latest treatments and technology to your patients and community.

▶ SHARE WHAT YOU'RE DOING

Describe how you're not only meeting these challenges but increasing value, improving performance, and enhancing quality and patient safety.

▶ OFFER ALTERNATIVES AND SOLUTIONS

Urge your legislators to support alternatives to reduce the deficit that represent real solutions to achieve efficiencies and savings, and reject arbitrary cuts to funding for hospital services.