

How the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPAC) Will Impact Your Practice and Your Patients

Issue	Description of New Policy	Effective Date(s)
Medicare Physician Payment	Congress will address the sustainable growth rate formula in separate legislation this summer. Currently, physician payments are frozen at 2009 levels through March 31.	
Primary Care Bonus Payments	All primary care physicians will be eligible for a 10% bonus in Medicare payments. To qualify, at least 60% of the physicians total Medicare charges must be comprised of office, nursing home, and home care visits.	2011 - 2016
General Surgery Bonus Payments	General surgeons who perform major procedures in a health professional shortage area will be eligible for a 10% bonus payment for those services. Major procedure is defined as any service with a 10 or 90 day global payment.	2011 - 2016
Medicaid Payments	Raises Medicaid payments for evaluation and management (E&M) services to at least 100% of Medicare payment rates.	2013 - 2014
Geographic Payment Adjustments	Establishes the “floor” on the work geographic practice cost indice (GPCI) at 1.0 for all localities for 2010. Medicare will begin making a separate adjustment for the practice expense portion of physician payments in 2010 and 2011. Increases the practice expense GPCI adjustment for physicians in North Dakota, Montana, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming to the national average beginning in 2011.	2010
Medical Liability Reform	The Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) is authorized to award five-year demonstration grants to states to develop, implement and evaluate alternative medical liability reform initiatives, such as health courts and early offer programs. Medical liability protections under the Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA) are extended to officers, governing board members, employees, and contractors of free health clinics.	2011
Community Health Centers	Funding for Community Health Centers increases by \$11 billion to assist in providing care to uninsured and underinsured individuals.	2011
Prevention and Wellness	Medicaid will be required to cover tobacco cessation services for pregnant women beginning in 2010. Cost-sharing for preventive services is eliminated in Medicare and Medicaid programs beginning in 2011. Medicare payments for these preventive services will be increased to 100 percent of payment schedule rates. Health plans are	2010

	required to provide a minimum level of coverage without cost-sharing for preventive services beginning in 2010.	
Mental Health Incentive Payments	Medicare will increase payments for psychotherapy services by 5%.	2010
Administrative Simplification	National rules will be implemented to standardize and streamline health insurance claims processing requirements.	2013 - 2016
Insurance Reforms	Insurers are prohibited from denying coverage to children who have pre-existing conditions. Insurers are prohibited from placing lifetime limits on how much they pay out to individual policyholders and from rescinding coverage except in the case of fraud. Adult dependent children up to the age of 26 are eligible for coverage under their parents or legal guardians' insurance policies.	2010
Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage	Medicare beneficiaries whose prescription expenses reach the so-called Medicare Part D coverage "doughnut hole" (\$2,700 to \$6,150) in 2010 will receive a \$250 rebate.	2010
Coverage Mandates – Employers	Employers with more than 50 employees, with a minimum of one full-time employee, which receives a premium tax credit, are required to offer health insurance coverage to their employees or face penalties. Employers with 50 employees or less are exempt from this requirement.	2014
Coverage Mandate – Individuals	Most individuals are required to either purchase health care coverage or demonstrate coverage through their employer or other program or face penalties.	2014
Medicaid Expansion	Low-income individuals under the age of 65 and at or below 133% of the federal poverty level (\$29,327 for family of four) are eligible for Medicaid coverage.	2014

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPAC) was enacted into law (Public Law 111-148) on March 23, 2010. It was approved by the United States Senate on December 24, 2009 and the House of Representatives on March 21, 2010.