



EDPMA Statement on Proposed Cuts to 2024 Medicare Emergency Medicine Payments

The Emergency Department Practice Management Association (EDPMA) urges Congress to stop the cuts announced by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to reimbursements for physicians providing care to Medicare beneficiaries. CMS estimates that its proposals will result in a 3.25% reduction in reimbursements to emergency medicine in 2024. This is due to policy changes made by the Agency that it estimates will result in a 2% cut to emergency medicine and the fact that Congressional conversion factor assistance will contract by 1.25% from 2023 to 2024.

2024 will be the fourth year in a row that the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule conversion factor has contracted. Congress must act yet again to stabilize the Fee Schedule by averting large reimbursement reductions. This is of particular urgency in emergency medicine. With EMTALA's guarantee that every emergency patient be seen regardless of their insurance status or ability to pay, emergency physicians are an irreplaceable component of our nation's health care safety net. At least 8% of all ED visits are provided to uninsured patients.^{1,2} The frequent delivery of these non-reimbursed services makes the reimbursement rates of other payers, including Medicare, even more critical. This is compounded by the increasing acuity of patients seen in the emergency department. The ability of emergency medicine practices to stay afloat has been shaken by the volatility of the COVID-19 pandemic and insurers seeking to reduce payments for medically necessary services. This has already forced practices to close, reducing access to care in some communities and leading to unnecessary consolidation.³

We call on Congress and other policymakers to ensure that Medicare fairly reimburses emergency services and avoids these across-the-board cuts that threaten the ability of emergency medicine practices to remain solvent and continue to provide care to our country's most vulnerable patients.

About EDPMA

The Emergency Department Practice Management Association (EDPMA) is the nation's only professional physician trade association focused on the delivery of high-quality, cost-effective

¹ National Center for Health Statistics, *National Hospital Ambulatory Medical Care Survey: 2020 Emergency Department Summary Tables*, p. 8, https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhamcs/web_tables/2020-nhamcs-ed-web-tables-508.pdf (accessed March 29, 2023).

² Christopher Cairns, M.P.H., Jill J. Ashman, Ph.D., and Kai Kang, M.P.H., *National Center for Health Statistics Data Brief No. 401, March 2021, Emergency Department Visit Rates by Selected Characteristics: United States, 2018*, <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db401.htm> (accessed March 29, 2023).

³ See, for example, Glatter, Robert, et al., *Time Magazine, American Health Care Faces a Staffing Crisis And It's Affecting Care*, <https://time.com/6291392/american-health-care-staffing-crisis/> (June 30, 2023).

care in the emergency department. EDPMA's membership includes emergency medicine physician groups of all sizes, as well as billing, coding, and other professional support organizations that assist healthcare providers in our nation's emergency departments. EDPMA members see or support 60% of all annual ED visits in the country and provides direct patient care of 40% of all ED visits. Visit <http://www.edpma.org>.