AMA Physicians’ Grassroots Webinar and Legislative Update

February 17, 2015
TOPICS

Five Keys for Being Heard (and AGREED With)

At Home Strategies

Your Checklist
Who’s Speaking?
Stephanie Vance

• Former DC Staff Director for Rep. Blumenauer
• Former Lobbyist National Public Radio
• Author 5 books on Advocacy
Your Role

- Education
- Public Relations
- Advocacy
- Lobbying
FIVE KEYS TO BEING HEARD
Number One: Look at the Larger Context
On the Agenda for the 114th Congress

- Budget
- Sequestration
- Debt Ceiling
- Immigration
- Gun Control
- Climate Change
- Transportation Reauthorization
- Workforce Investment Act
- Election Reform
- Farm Bill
- Terrorism
- Tax Reform
- Unemployment
- Cyber-Security
- Renewable Energy
- Keystone

... and that’s just the beginning
Key Challenge

Operating in a decision-making environment
Types of Policy Actions

Intent

Action or Inertia
Types of Policy Actions

Scope

Controversial or Easy
Importance

Must do vs. May do
Types of Policy Actions

Timeframe

Short vs. Long Term
The Larger Context: Messages That Resonate
Number Two: Know What You Want

What’s Your Ask?
- Relationship-building
- Policy-related
Knowing What You Want

Resource

Grassroots Advocacy

Last year, Congress came close to passing bipartisan legislation that would have permanently fixed the SGR crisis. In the end, they kicked the can down the road and passed another patch. While many members of Congress remain committed to finding a permanent solution to SGR, the reality is that time is running out for Congress to pass a permanent repeal before the patch expires on March 31, 2019.

That's why we need you to turn up the heat on your lawmakers to encourage them to continue working in a bipartisan manner and remind them that they have unfinished business on repealing the SGR formula and designing a new Medicare physician payment system.

Send your members of Congress an urgent email and call their district offices via the AMA's Physicians Grassroots Network hotline at (800) 633-6354.

Be sure to visit FixMedicareNow.org for the latest information and resources on the AMA's efforts to engage physicians, patients and policymakers in the effort to repeal the flawed Medicare SGR formula and achieve reform that will transform Medicare into an effective, 21st century model of care.

SGR talking points
Number Three:

Know Who You’re Talking To

What gets them up in the morning
What keeps them up at night
Specific Questions to Answer About Legislators

- **Bottom Line:** What gets them up in the morning and keeps them up at night
- Their policy interests
- What kind of player are they?
- What type are they?
- Committee Situation
- Your Connections
- Re-election percentage
- Campaign finance situation
Knowing Who You’re Talking To

Resources
Who You’re Talking To: Some Notes on Staff (and Why It’s Often BETTER to Meet With Them!)

- Talk to the Right Person
- Remember, Your Issue Is One of Many
- Staff Contact Has Advantages Over Member Contact
- Institutional Memory in an Elected Official’s Office Can Be Short
- Expect (and Appreciate) Youth
Number Four: Know How to Talk to Them

Use the S.P.I.T. Technique
Specific, Personal, Informative and Timely
The Message Formula

• Hello, my name is [] and I’m from [] (establishes relevancy)
• I am here to talk to you about [key asks]
• Knowing of your interest in [info about your audience] I think you’ll be interested as well
• This is important to the people I represent because [personal story]
• That’s why I really hope you’ll [ask]
• I’d like to follow-up by [follow-up ideas]
• Contact information?
Number Five: Know How to Follow-Up

At Home: Use ALL Your Influence Strategies
District In-Office Meetings

- Meeting with Legislator
- Meeting with DC Policy Staff (when available)
- Meeting with District Staff
Townhalls

• What is a “townhall?”

• How do they take place?
  • In-person
  • Virtual
  • Telephone

• How do you do it?
Do the Social Media Thing

#FixMedicareNow
Perhaps Most Important?
Have Fun!

Fun Is Good
Dr. Seuss
Your Checklist

- What are you asking for?
- Why might your audience want that?
- What compelling story can you share?
- How can you best connect with staff?
- What can you do to follow-up?
  - Schedule a local meeting
  - Attend a townhall
  - Connect on social media
Go Forth and Advocate!
Legislative Update: Medicare Physician Payment Reform

February 17, 2015
SGR is the main grassroots subject for Spring

- Recurring topic, familiar to most
- 17th payment patch expires on April 1
  - Scheduled cuts about 20%
- Agreement on policy
  - Bill must be reintroduced in 114th Congress
- Budget offsets remain a challenge
  - Recent CBO score: $174.5 billion
  - Freeze: $137.4 billion
"SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act"*

| Policy       | • Repeals SGR, promotes new models, eases P4P risk, provides needed flexibility and support  
|             | • Patches are fiscally irresponsible |
| Process     | • Cleared 3 committees in 2014  
|             | • Policy agreement from last year holds |
| Politics    | • Bipartisan, bicameral agreement  
|             | • 644 physician organizations on record in support  
|             | • Conservative voices weighing in |
| Challenges  | • Budget offsets  
|             | • Other stakeholders fear cuts, loss of annual legislative vehicle |

*H.R. 4015/ S. 2000 in 113th Congress
## Key provisions

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<tr>
<th>Addresses “regulatory tsunami”</th>
<th>Incentives APMs</th>
<th>Provides stability</th>
<th>Improves transparency</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>• Consolidates and streamlines existing reporting and quality programs</td>
<td>• Additional payments and regulatory relief</td>
<td>• Eliminates SGR formula</td>
<td>• Requires more timely feedback to physicians on performance</td>
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<td>• Merit-based Incentive Payment System provides greater flexibility</td>
<td>• Provides technical support to small practices, rural areas</td>
<td>• Provides 5 years of positive updates</td>
<td>• Allows qualified entities to provide analysis and data for quality improvement</td>
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<td>• Maintains viable fee-for-service option</td>
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<td>• Improves on-line patient resources</td>
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## Current Congressional environment

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<th>House</th>
<th>Senate</th>
<th>Partisanship</th>
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| • 58 new Representatives  
• 49% elected 2010 or later | • 13 new Senators (7 former House members)  
• 46% elected 2010 or later | • Most elected in a highly partisan era  
• No experience with big deals, compromise  
• SGR legislation requires bipartisan support |
Key message points

**Time**
- Current patch expires on April 1, 2015
- Another patch would be the 18th since 2003

**Fiscal responsibility**
- More has been spent on temporary patches than it would cost to permanently repeal the SGR

**Reform**
- Legislation drafted last year represents real Medicare reform
- Promotes new models expected to produce long-term savings

**Negotiate**
- Policy agreement holds; remaining obstacle is agreement on a framework for budget offsets
- Leaders must be encouraged to do so before the deadline
Use Social Media

• Show your support for SGR repeal on Twitter. Send a tweet using the hashtag #FixMedicareNow.

• Ask your Senators and your Representative to tweet from their official accounts:

  “I support repeal of the SGR. Congress must act. #FixMedicareNow”.
AMA resources

Tell your Senators and Representative: It is time to finish the job. Send Medicare physician payment reform to the President’s desk.

Few legislative days remain before the current Medicare physician payment patch expires on April 1, 2015. If Congress fails to pass comprehensive Medicare physician payment reform by this self-imposed deadline, we will be confronting an 18th payment patch.

Continuing to patch the SGR is fiscally irresponsible. Repeal is fiscally responsible.

Since 2003, Congress has enacted 17 patches to stop Medicare physician payment cuts. The cumulative cost of these patches is $169.5 billion, which exceeds the cost of simply repealing the SGR.

Frequently asked questions about repealing the SGR
AMA resources

www.FixMedicareNow.org

Grassroots hotline: 1-800-833-6354

www.ama-assn.org/go/grassroots
Questions?

• Please type your questions for our presenters into the Chat box.