



California Medical Association
Physicians dedicated to the health of Californians

PBGH

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Diverse California Health Care Stakeholders Push for Medicare Reform
California Medical Association, Pacific Business Group on Health and cross-section of health care leaders call for quality measurement, public reporting and payment improvements to Medicare

Washington, DC (September 29, 2005) — Today, key California health care leaders, including the California Medical Association (CMA) and, Pacific Business Group on Health (PBGH), and a dozen individuals submitted a consensus statement asking Congress to move ahead now with legislation creating a Medicare quality performance system for the 21st Century. The legislation would simultaneously fix the flawed Medicare physician payment formula and add pay-for-performance and public reporting components that reward physicians for providing quality care.

The statement was submitted to hearings being held today by the Committee on Ways & Means on HR 3617 (Johnson), also known as the Medicare Value-Based Purchasing for Physicians' Services Act of 2005. Twelve leaders from California's physician community, physician groups, health plans, purchasers and consumers signed the statement.

"CMA physicians are providing superior care and we support a phased-in implementation that rewards physicians for tracking and reporting quality measures," said Dr. Jack Lewin, CEO of the CMA. "Physicians are already doing this in California and we stand ready to work with Congress to bring this innovation to Medicare."

Dr. Lewin noted that CMA is the first state medical association in the country to endorse this bill. "It brings health care and physician reimbursements into the 21st Century," he said.

"This consensus statement to Congress reflects our experience in California where pay-for-performance and public reporting has improved the delivery of healthcare across the state," said Peter Lee, President and CEO of the Pacific Business Group on Health, a purchasing coalition that has been leading this joint effort and working to improve health care quality and moderate costs. "Reforming Medicare to reward quality and make public valid performance information at the physician level has the potential to not only foster improvements in Medicare, but to help provide desperately needed leadership for the entire health care system."

For more information, or to view the consensus statement, please go to: www.pbgh.org.

About the Pacific Business Group on Health

The Pacific Business Group on Health (PBGH), a business coalition of 50 purchasers, seeks to improve the quality and availability of health care while moderating cost. Since 1989, PBGH has played a leading role both nationally and statewide in health care measurement, trend moderation, and system accountability through public reporting.

The California Medical Association is the professional organization of 35,000 physicians from throughout California, representing all specialties and modes of practice.