

Take your story to Congress: How will the cuts impact your community?

Sharing the real-world impact of proposed Medicare cuts with your members of Congress in their home district is the single most effective way to drive change. The most important action you can take is to tell your personal story.



TELL YOUR STORY

- **Highlight your deep community roots:** Remember that both your patients and your clinic staff are local constituents. You are caring for their community members and providing stable healthcare jobs in their district.
- **Quantify your local footprint:** Share approximately how many patients your practice sees each year and how many local clinical and administrative staff you employ.
- **Highlight the impact on local jobs:** Explain how a 9% cut directly threatens healthcare jobs in their district (medical assistants, nurses, practice managers, front-desk staff) and makes it harder to offer competitive wages amidst rising inflation.
- **Explain the impact on patient care:** Detail how losing clinical support forces doctors to spend more time on administrative paperwork and less time face-to-face with patients, leading to appointment bottlenecks and delayed care.
- **Paint the picture:** Describe what happens to senior wait times and local care access if your practice is forced to reduce appointment availability or close its doors.

THE ASKS: WHAT TO ASK YOUR LEGISLATOR TO DO

Ask your Senator or Representative to take concrete action by:

1. **Weighing in directly with CMS leadership:** Urge CMS Administrator Dr. Mehmet Oz and agency leadership to withdraw the proposed 50% payment reduction for same-day evaluation services appropriately reported with Modifier 25.
2. **Protecting specialty practice expense formulas:** Tell CMS to pause proposed changes to practice expense calculations until the agency incorporates meaningful physician input and prevents major payment shifts across specialties.

BACKGROUND AND KEY TALKING POINTS

Use these points to answer specific policy questions during your meeting:

- **Severe single-year impact:** CMS estimates that the proposed CY 2027 rule will reduce overall Medicare payments for dermatology by approximately 9% in a single year.
- **Threat to local jobs and access:** Local practices cover 100% of their operational and payroll expenses. A 9% cut jeopardizes a practice's ability to pay for essential clinical support staff, threatening local healthcare jobs and creating severe appointment bottlenecks for senior constituents.
- **No inflationary cushion:** Unlike hospitals and large health systems, physicians and independent practices do not receive an automatic annual inflation update under Medicare. Absorbing a 9% cut on top of years of unaddressed inflation and rising operational costs is completely unsustainable.
- **Two proposals are hitting dermatology disproportionately:**
 - **50% cut to same-day care (modifier 25):** Same-day care is the gold standard of patient-centered medicine. It enables seniors and rural patients to get a suspicious mole evaluated and biopsied during the very same visit as their other medical concerns, saving travel time and avoiding delays in diagnosis. Existing Medicare valuation rules already adjust for shared overhead during same-day visits. Slashing payment by half penalizes efficient care.
 - **Volatile practice expense formula changes:** CMS is proposing to phase out longstanding practice expense indices, arbitrarily redistributing funds away from specialty care. Local practices have zero cushion to absorb these sudden financial shifts.

QUICK IN-DISTRICT MEETING TIPS

- **Arrive 10 minutes early** and bring your business cards.
- **Offer to be a local health policy resource** for the member's district staff on healthcare and skin cancer issues.
- **Leave behind the AAD Policy Leave-Behind Sheet** before you exit.
- **Take a photo** with the member or staffer (with their permission), and send it to AAD advocacy staff!



QUICK TIPS