

May 17, 2023

The Honorable Larry Bucshon, MD
United States House of Representatives
2313 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Raul Ruiz, MD
United States House of Representatives
2342 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mariannette Miller-Meeks, MD
United States House of Representatives
1034 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ami Bera, MD
United States House of Representatives
172 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Drs. Bucshon, Miller-Meeks, Ruiz, and Bera:

On behalf of the Society of Gynecologic Oncology (SGO), thank you for introducing H.R. 2474, the Strengthening Medicare for Patients and Providers Act to bring stability to Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS) reimbursement. SGO joins more than 100 medical societies in endorsing this legislation which is a critical first step toward improving the sustainability of the MPFS and assuring Medicare beneficiary access to care.

The SGO is the premier medical specialty society for health care professionals trained in the comprehensive management of gynecologic cancers. Our more than 2,800 members include physicians, advanced practice providers, nurses and patient advocates who collaborate with the Foundation for Women's Cancer to increase public awareness of gynecologic cancers and improve the care of those diagnosed with gynecologic cancers. Our primary mission focuses on supporting research, disseminating knowledge, raising the standards of practice in the prevention and treatment of gynecologic malignancies, and collaborating with other organizations dedicated to gynecologic cancers and related fields, all with the ultimate vision of eradicating gynecologic cancers.

The entire physician community continues to face unpredictable Medicare reimbursement rates and rising inflation – a perfect storm of financial instability that threatens SGO members' ability to care for patients. Physician payments have stagnated for the last two decades and have not kept pace with the recent spike in inflation. According to an American Medical Association (AMA) analysis of Medicare Trustees data, Medicare physician payment has been reduced by 22 percent when adjusted for inflation from 2001–2022. Unlike other Medicare payment systems, the MPFS does not have a consistent mechanism for updating payments, and the results are clear: payment for Medicare physician services have not kept pace with those delivered outside of the physician office, the consumer price index, or practice costs.

The last positive update to the MPFS was in 2019 and for the last three years, Congress has intervened to temporarily mitigate Medicare physician payment cuts. While these short-term fixes have been necessary, they exacerbate budgeting challenges for physicians and Congress, and detract from the need

for comprehensive payment reforms. For these reasons, SGO is pleased to see that H.R. 2474 would authorize an annual inflation-based update to the MPFS conversion factor equal to the Medicare Economic Index (MEI). This legislation will help practices cover the growing cost of clinical staff, rent, medical supplies and equipment, malpractice insurance, and other necessary expenses. Moreover, this legislation will help to protect the supply of our nation's physicians and preserve patient access to care, particularly in areas where there may be a shortage of providers.

SGO thanks you for your leadership and continued efforts to protect patient access to care. Should you have any questions or require SGO members' expertise, please don't hesitate to contact Erika Miller, JD, at emiller@dc-crd.com.

Sincerely,



Angeles Alvarez Secord, MD, MHSc
SGO President, 2023-2024