

**ACOG Government Affairs
Late Breaking News July 2, 2009**

Medicare Physician Payment Proposal Released

Increased Payments to Primary Care Physicians
Cuts to Many Specialties and Imaging
Drugs Removed from Physician Pool

Ob-Gyn and Ultrasound Are Protected

The Obama Administration yesterday announced its plan to cut Medicare payments for imaging services and many specialties, in order to increase payments to primary care physicians.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) proposal, to be published July 13 in the Federal Register, would:

- Increase payments to internists, family physicians, general practitioners and geriatric specialists by 6% to 8% next year,
- Pay for that increase by:
 - Reducing E&M code payments to many specialties and
 - Reducing MRI & CT payment by about 20%, and
- Remove physician-administered drugs from the annual payment update formula, dramatically reducing the cost of eliminating the SGR.

Ob-Gyn and Ultrasound are protected under the Administration plan.

Ob-gyn rates would increase by 1%, and ultrasound is omitted from CMS's imaging cut, which should help us win these fights in Congress, too. Click [here](#) for the table of cuts.

All physician payments are still subject to the overall Medicare payment cut scheduled for 2010, but these changes help ob-gyn and make eliminating the SGR much easier to accomplish.

The proposed rule is open for public comment until August 31, and is available online at: <http://www.federalregister.gov/inspection.aspx#special>

ACOG is continuing to review the 1128-page rule and will develop a more detailed analysis and summary of the proposed changes.