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**REACH OUT TO CONGRESS TO STOP IME CUTS**

CMS' elimination of the Indirect Medical Education (IME) adjustment to Medicare capital prospective payment system payments is now scheduled to take effect Oct. 1, cutting payments to Illinois teaching hospitals by an estimated \$22 million annually. It is important that IHA members ask their members of Congress to sign the "Dear Colleague" letters being circulated calling for the cut to be withdrawn. The IME adjustment recognizes the high costs teaching hospitals incur as part of their unique mission in training the next generation of physicians and the fact that they often treat sicker patients and provide highly specialized services, such as trauma and neonatal care.

U.S. Reps. Richard Neal (D-MA) and Patrick Tiberi (R-OH) are urging fellow House members to sign a [letter to President Obama](#) asking him to withdraw the IME cut. Senators Charles Schumer (D-NY) and Pat Roberts (R-KS) are circulating a similar [letter](#) among their colleagues urging CMS to withdraw the cut.

Earlier this week, IHA sent letters to the entire Illinois Congressional delegation urging lawmakers to sign the letters, saying in part, "The elimination of the IME adjustment payment would further burden

**THIS WEEK'S MAIL**

[IHA Illinois Quality Leadership Conference](#)  
TO: CEOs; CMOs; CIOs; CQOs; CNOs; Infection Prevention Directors; COMPdata Contacts

[Spreading the Review of Complex Performance Measurements Within Hospitals](#)

TO: CEOs; CFOs; CMOs; CIOs; CQOs; CNOs; Infection Prevention Directors; COMPdata Contacts

[This Week's Mail Archive](#)



**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**April 21:** [Chargemasters: Understanding Revenue Codes](#)

**April 21-22:** [Hospital Case Management: Influencing Positive Clinical and Financial Outcomes](#)

**April 22, 23, 24:** [IHA Patient Safety Collaborative Free Informational Webinars](#)

**April 23:** [What Do I Need to Know? New and Emerging Risks](#), sponsored by the Illinois Society of Healthcare Risk

teaching hospitals, especially those serving large numbers of Medicare beneficiaries and providing the highly specialized services that are vital to meeting the needs of Illinoisans.”

To send email messages to your members of Congress, [click here](#).

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## STATE TO PAY MEDICAID BILLS MORE QUICKLY

Gov. Pat Quinn announced this week that the state will draw over \$200 million in federal funds from the economic stimulus law to pay many past due Medicaid bills to hospitals and nursing homes. The State must reduce the payment cycle to 30 days or less by June 1. Under the stimulus law, Illinois’ federal Medicaid matching rate increased from about 50% to just over 60%.

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## STATE LEGISLATURE FACES TOUGH ISSUES

The General Assembly returns to Springfield April 21 after a two-week break. In the 28 days left on the House spring session calendar and the 27 days on the Senate calendar, lawmakers face some difficult decisions as they grapple with a state budget deficit estimated at more than \$12 billion.

In these challenging economic times, IHA continues to talk to and meet with key legislators and the Governor’s staff and to [testify](#) before key committees on the need to protect Medicaid funding and health care in the state budget. In addition, IHA recently distributed documents to every legislator on critical issues concerning hospitals:

- [IHA’s response](#) to a Senate Republican proposal on deficit reductions, including major cuts to Medicaid;
- [IHA’s response](#) to a flawed report on hospital charity care and tax-exemption; and
- [Results of an IHA survey](#) of members on the impact of the recession on hospitals.

In addition to working to protect Medicaid in the new state budget and include hospitals in a statewide capital program, IHA is seeking final legislative approval of **SB1905** in the House to reform and extend the Certificate of Need Program. To send emails to your state representative and the Governor to urge enactment of **SB1905**, [click here](#).

Management

**April 23-24:** [Health Care Office Professionals Annual Spring Business Meeting](#)

**April 26-29:** [AHA Annual Membership Meeting/IHA Event](#)

**Save the Date:**

**May 5 -** [IHA Illinois Quality Leadership Conference](#)

**May 7 -** [Continuous Service Readiness Seminar and Workshop](#)

[Education Programs](#)

[COMPdata Programs](#)

[Sponsorship Opportunities](#)

IHA is also continuing its vigilance to make sure that last-minute amendments on issues that would hurt hospitals such as mandatory nurse-patient staffing ratios do not advance in the current legislative session.

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## QUENTIN YOUNG TO CHAIR PLANNING BOARD

Quentin Young, a well-known Chicago physician and single payer advocate, was appointed chair of the Illinois Health Facilities Planning Board by Gov. Quinn on Friday. In 2001, Young, who was Gov. Quinn's personal physician, walked 167 miles with Quinn from the Mississippi River in Rock Island to Chicago's Lake Michigan shoreline to promote health care for all.

During his long career, Young has held a number of prominent positions, including:

- A founder and national chair of the Medical Committee for Human Rights, formed in June of 1964 to provide medical care for civil rights workers in Mississippi during Freedom Summer;
- Chair of Medicine at Cook County Hospital from 1972 to 1981;
- Founder and current chair of the board of the Health and Medicine Policy Research Group; and
- President of the American Public Health Association in 1988.

Young is currently National Coordinator of Physicians for a National Health Program, an organization of 14,000 physicians advocating for single-payer national health insurance.

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## RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO FIGHT "CARD CHECK"

AHA is a member of the Coalition for a Democratic Workplace, which offers an online [resource](#) of handouts, ads, sample letters to the editor and other tools for communicating with Congress, the news media and public to oppose the Employee Free Choice Act. [Click here](#) for more information and to send an email to your members of Congress opposing "card check" legislation.

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## HOSPITALS URGED TO JOIN PSC

Every hospital has room for improvement in the area of preventing blood stream infections – an area that is under increasing scrutiny from the federal government, the media, and state legislators. [Click here](#) to sign up for the 2009 Patient Safety Collaborative – an outstanding opportunity for your hospital to work with experts from The Johns Hopkins University and learn new strategies proven to reduce central line associated blood stream infections. Joining IHA's 2009 collaborative will demonstrate to key audiences your leadership and commitment to improving patient safety in Illinois.

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## SMALL & RURAL HOSPITALS MEET IN JUNE

The 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Small & Rural Hospitals Constituency Section Annual Meeting will be held June 23-25 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Springfield. "[Celebrating 30 Years: Advancing Health Care In Rural Illinois](#)" will include speakers Larry Walker on "Governance Never Events: 10 Leadership Failures"; Maureen Swan, presenting "Health Care Trends"; and Rich Miller of Capitol Fax. Contact [Anne Stilwell](#) for more information at 217-541-1163.

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## ADMINISTRATION PUSHES HEALTH CARE REFORM

The director of the White House's new Office of Health Reform said this week at a briefing sponsored by the Kaiser Family Foundation that work on health care reform is continuing to move forward, with two Senate committees and three House committees involved in the issue. Unlike reform efforts during the Clinton administration, said Nancy Ann Min-DeParle, "Congress has put its money where its mouth is" and has enacted a budget resolution that includes health care reform and a health care reserve fund. But many issues are still of concern, including reforming the Medicare payment system "to get better incentives for hospitals to prevent readmissions."

Earlier this week, in a speech at Georgetown University, President Obama said health care reform is a crucial first step toward reforming Medicare and Medicaid, but additional changes in the public health care programs will be needed to help curb federal spending.

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## BRIEFLY NOTED

- IHA and hospitals across Illinois and the country participated in National Healthcare Decisions Day on April 16, including **Proctor Hospital**, Peoria, **St. James Hospital and Health Centers**, Chicago Heights, and **St. Joseph's Hospital**, Breese. This initiative encourages patients to convey their wishes concerning future health care if they become unable to speak for themselves – through advance directives – and for providers and facilities to honor those wishes. [Materials](#) are available on the IHA web site.
- Hospital Quality Alliance preview reports with the latest quarterly data for 30-day readmission rates for heart attack, heart failure and pneumonia patients and updates of hospitals' 30-day mortality rates are at the [Quality Net Exchange web site](#). The data is expected to be added to the [Hospital Compare web site](#) in June.
- The Illinois Dept. of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) issued a [notice](#) regarding expensive drugs and devices that are eligible for additional payment for specified drugs and devices provided in conjunction with a procedure from the ambulatory procedures listing. New codes were added and some have been revised.
- As of Feb. 1, 2009, HFS [increased](#) reimbursement rates for specialty codes including neonatal critical care and pediatric specialty office consultations. HFS anticipates an increase in rates for adult office consultations in June.

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## STUDIES AND SURVEYS

- An analysis by the Scripps Howard News Service has found that access to primary care is deteriorating, with one in five Americans not having a family doctor and millions finding it impossible to see a doctor except in an emergency room or walk-in clinic. Counties with more primary care physicians had lower death rates, the study showed, especially from preventable diseases, than those with few or no family doctors.
- According to the annual Leapfrog Group survey, only 7% of 1,276 participating hospitals fully meet the group's computer physician-order entry standard, and 65% don't have all the recommended policies for preventing hospital-acquired infections in place. Leapfrog's CEO said the participating hospitals are some of the best, but still haven't reached a high-performing level. Standards of efficiency, defined as providing the highest quality with the lowest resource utilization, are met by 24% of hospitals for heart

bypass surgery, 21% for heart angioplasty, 14% for heart attack care and 14% for pneumonia care.

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