

## Sample Letter from Patients Regarding Therapy Cap

[Date]

Dear Senator/Representative [Name]:

As a patient of speech-language pathology services, I am writing to ask you to take action to pass legislation this month to stop arbitrary Medicare financial limits or "therapy caps" from harming beneficiaries who need outpatient speech-language pathology, physical therapy, and occupational therapy services. The therapy caps for 2010 are currently set at a combined \$1,860 for speech-language pathology and physical therapy and \$1,860 for occupational therapist services per beneficiary per year.

The cap without the exceptions process went into effect on January 1, 2010. This cap will force beneficiaries needing care above the therapy cap to travel to an outpatient hospital facility for care, forgo care, or face paying 100 percent of the cost of additional treatment out-of-pocket when coverage expires.

Over the past decade, Congress has recognized the potential harm in this policy and has passed several moratoriums on its enforcement. Starting in 2006, Congress allowed the therapy cap to go into effect and then passed legislation allowing for exceptions for beneficiaries needing care above the financial limit. In June of 2008, Congress extended this exceptions process through December 31, 2009.

As you may know, there are inherent problems with the therapy cap. The arbitrary therapy caps have a disproportionate impact on those Medicare beneficiaries who need therapy care the most. Beneficiaries who suffer from a stroke, or have Parkinson's disease, or osteoporosis are most likely to be the type of patient needing such care.

A hard therapy cap with no exceptions process was reinstated on all Medicare beneficiaries on January 1, 2010. While the best long term solution is to pass the Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Services Act of 2009 (H.R. 43/ S. 46), which would repeal the arbitrary therapy caps once and for all, Congress must at least extend the current exceptions process to ensure access to care in the short term.

Please take action to pass legislation as soon as possible to extend the therapy cap exceptions process. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Patient Name]