

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

**Don't Penalize the Oldest and Sickest of Our
Medicare Seniors**

Dear Colleague:

Please join us as a cosponsor of the *Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Services Act of 2002* to repeal the \$1,500 Medicare beneficiary therapy cap. As you may know, the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 included an arbitrary \$1,500 cap on most outpatient rehabilitation services. Unfortunately, the \$1,500 limits were adopted without the benefit of committee hearings or detailed analysis by the then-Health Care Financing Administration of their likely effects on beneficiaries' ability to obtain medically necessary services.

Congress has already shown its opposition to this arbitrary \$1,500 cap by placing a moratorium on it in 1999. One year later, Congress extended the moratorium until January 2003. Without Congressional action, the beneficiary cap on therapy services will be effective again in just over a year. It is time to repeal the cap once and for all.

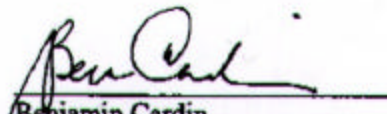
Most individuals who need rehabilitation therapy would not exceed \$1,500 of care in a given year. However, it is unfair to require beneficiaries who need more care to pay 100% out-of-pocket for it. It would be those beneficiaries who suffer from stroke, Parkinson's disease, or other chronic debilitating conditions who would likely exceed the \$1,500 therapy cap. Repealing the cap would cost less than \$100 million in fiscal year 2003 and approximately \$500 million over 5 years according to a cost estimate by PricewaterhouseCoopers. The oldest and sickest Medicare beneficiaries should not be forced to shoulder this burden.

Our legislation simply ensures that the payment system for rehabilitation services reflects the needs of Medicare beneficiaries based on their condition rather than an arbitrary monetary amount. We urge you to join us in repealing the \$1,500 therapy cap and establishing a system that makes sense. If you are interested in becoming a cosponsor this bill or for more information, please contact Julie Ufner in Phil English's office at 5-5406, Priscilla Ross in Benjamin Cardin's at office 5-4016, Annissa McDonald in Roy Blunt's office at 5-6536, or Kathy Kulkarni in Frank Pallone's office at 5- 4671.

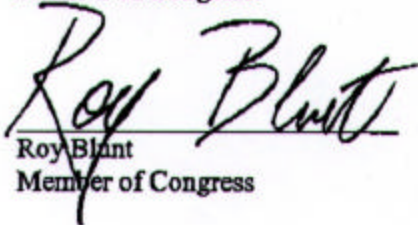
Sincerely,



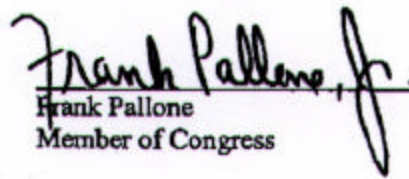
Phil English
Member of Congress



Benjamin Cardin
Member of Congress



Roy Blunt
Member of Congress



Frank Pallone
Member of Congress