

# National Association for the Support of Long Term Care

Your Advocacy Voice for Quality In Post Acute Care

## NASL e-Newsletter

January 4, 2010

### New Year's Celebration Delayed...For Now

At the end of 2009, the Senate gave final approval to a defense spending bill that included short-term relief from the proposed 21 percent cut in the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule. President Obama has signed the measure into law, keeping the conversion factor at \$36.0666 through February 28, 2010. This offers temporary relief as we await a longer extension from Congress.

And despite a full-court press by NASL and other therapy stakeholders, Congress did not pass a short-term extension of the therapy cap exceptions process. The \$1860 therapy caps – without the exceptions process – went into effect January 1, 2010. Every indication leading up to the vote on the Defense bill was that a short-term extension of the exceptions process would be included in the final bill. However, congressional leaders apparently decided at the last minute that the therapy cap exceptions process did not need a short-term extension because they plan to complete work on the health care reform bill before they think people will begin to hit the cap.

Although this was a disappointing turn of events, there is still strong support on Capitol Hill for extending the therapy cap exceptions process. We will be pressing House and Senate negotiators to include the House-passed two-year extension. NASL members will be alerted with new developments.

Both the House and Senate health bills include an extension of the therapy exceptions process, Senate – one year and House – two years. The Senate version of health care reform also proposes a cut in SNF Medicare funding by an estimated \$14.6 billion over 10 years and a delay in the implementation of RUG-IV for one year. However, it directs CMS to move forward with its plan for concurrent therapy, which was proposed in the 2010 SNF PPS.

### Health Reform - At the Finish Line

NASL Health Policy  
Webinar

January 13, 2010  
1:00 – 2:00pm EST

Next step is a conference committee with members from the Senate and House to work out the differences between the Senate- and House-passed bills. Before the measure can be sent to the president, each chamber must pass a bill containing identical language. Congressional leaders are pressed to complete action on the bill in time for the President's State of the Union address.

NASL Policy Counsel, Bryan Cave, LLP will discuss all of this and more in a webinar, Wednesday, January 13 from 1:00 – 2:00pm EST. This is a free event for all NASL members; the non-member fee is \$149. Registration is available [HERE](#).

### Registration Open for Winter Legislative and Regulatory Conference

The NASL Winter Conference is the premier meeting for suppliers and providers of long term and post acute care supplies and services. Confirmed speakers include CMS representatives [Sheila Lambowitz](#), [Thomas Dudley](#), [Mary Pratt](#), [Kimberly Brandt](#), key Capitol Hill insiders and policy authorities. Attendees will receive timely perspectives and valuable insights into health care reform, MDS 3.0 and the latest regulatory and legislative developments affecting our industry.



### NASL Winter Legislative & Regulatory Conference

February 10-12, 2010  
Ritz-Carlton, Pentagon City  
Arlington, Virginia

### Winter Conference Quick Links

- [Registration](#)
- [Tentative Agenda](#)
- [Hotel Accommodations](#): Deadline January 18, 2010. Use group code NLANLAA.
- [Sponsorship](#) **NEW!**
- [NASL Member Event Calendar](#)