

Worries that keep private practice cardiologists up at night...

- The 2010 Proposed Physician Fee Schedule, which slashes payments to cardiologists by 11 percent or more (not including the 21.5-percent mandated cut under the flawed Sustainable Growth Rate formula) and will bundle nuclear procedures
- The chipping away of physicians' rights to own assets such as imaging equipment and specialty hospitals
- Congressional healthcare "reforms" that will weaken physicians' ability to provide critical diagnostic services to their patients and serve outlying/rural populations
- Further hampering of physicians' ability to order the right scan at the right time by implementing Radiology Benefits Managers (RBMs) for Medicare patients

Losing these battles will have a significant impact on how cardiologists practice today and their ability to provide the best care, in the best place, for their patients. And instead of remaining on the sidelines, we've decided to take action.

Cardiology Advocacy Alliance: Fighting for you and your patients

The Cardiology Advocacy Alliance (CAA) is a nonprofit organization that represents the interests of more than 5,000 private practice cardiologists nationwide. CAA provides national leadership on legislation, policies and evolving reimbursement methodologies that affect the quality of care and access to services of cardiovascular patients, as well as the stability of cardiovascular group practices.

CAA's 2009 priorities include:

- **Fighting proposed health care "reforms" and Medicare proposed fee schedule cuts** that will restrict patient access to critical cardiac services.
- **Improving quality, maintaining patient access to care and ensuring appropriate utilization** through lab accreditation, physician credentialing and appropriateness criteria, rather than through cuts to imaging payments, implementation of Medicare RBMs and other impediments to the physician-patient relationship.
- **Protecting the rights of physicians to own assets**, including heart hospitals and imaging equipment.
- **Keeping the Equipment Utilization (EU) assumption rate at an appropriate level:** MedPAC, Medicare and Congress propose to increase the EU rate from its current 50 percent up to 75 or even 90 percent for imaging equipment. Some proposals would include nuclear and echo as well as equipment valued at more than \$1 million.

"If we remain silent, we have no right to complain."



How to join forces with CAA

CAA has lowered its dues for 2009! Investing in CAA is only \$175 per practice physician. Please contact Executive Director Margo Burrage at 734.878.2108 or mburrage@cardiologycaa.com. Or visit our website: cardiologycaa.com.