

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

In Other News

Part B practices breathed a sigh of relief in December when Congress froze Medicare payments at 2010 levels throughout 2011. Because of that vote, you haven't had to deal with the potentially devastating 25 percent cuts that you would have faced on Jan. 1 -- but the cuts are still poised to take effect in 2012 -- unless **President Obama's** new budget proposal clears administrative hurdles.

On Feb. 14, the White House Office of Management and Budget unveiled its new budget proposal, which would delay Medicare cuts for another two years -- through Dec. 31, 2013. The pay cuts would still kick in as of 2014, but physician advocacy groups hope that a permanent solution to the Medicare payment issues will be established by then.

"In December, there was a bipartisan agreement to pay for a one-year extension of the so-called 'doc fix' -- which was not required by budget rules but was the right thing to do, said Office of Management and Budget director **Jack Lew** in a statement. "Building on that, our budget identifies \$62 billion of specific health savings to pay for the next two years of this fix -- establishing a clear pattern that, consistent with our budget, this needs to be paid for in the future."

To read the complete proposed budget, visit www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget.