

## Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

### LEGISLATION: Chances of Medicare Reform Bill Limited

Some are predicting that 2004 will see yet another giant Medicare bill, partly aimed at fixing problems or containing costs associated with last year's bill. For one thing, some Senators are grouching that the conference committee's version of last year's bill was different in some important areas than what Congress later passed.

But a new Medicare bill is unlikely this year, says attorney **Allison Shuren** with **Arent Fox Kintner Plotkin & Kahn** in Washington. "You're going to see a lot of bills this year by the Democrats," but they're unlikely to prosper, she predicts. "I don't think you're going to see any real legislation passed short of a patient safety bill." So you're safe from Medicare user fees, unless legislators tack them on to another bill.