

## Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

### Legislation: Senate Passes Bill to Slash Medical Errors

It may get easier soon for doctors to admit they slipped up.

The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee unanimously passed a bill to make it easier for doctors and other professionals to report medical errors. Proponents say the bill will reduce the "culture of blame" that prevents providers from disclosing mistakes so everyone can learn from them.

Under the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2003, physicians' reports of medical errors would be analyzed by "patient safety organizations," which will use them to develop new procedures and techniques to protect patients. [Physicians Coder](#) won't have to fear being sued over these disclosures, but patients won't lose their legal rights either. The Institute of Medicine estimates that 98,000 Americans die every year from medical errors.