

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

MEDICARE REFORM: Grassley Provisions Unpopular With Many

The cancer community, including patient advocacy groups, oncologists, oncology nurses and others, continues to advocate "balanced reform," says attorney **Larri Short** with **Arent Fox Kintner Plotkin & Kahn** in Washington, D.C. "Cuts to AWP and drugs are acceptable only with commensurate increases in practice expenses," she says.

"The Grassley amendment cut drug reimbursement but failed to address practice expenses at all," Short adds. "The cancer community believes the amendment would have had an adverse impact on access."

"We'd love to see anything that gives providers more money as long as it doesn't take money away from other providers," says **Paul Speidell**, government affairs representative with the **Medical Group Management Association**. If the Grassley bandwagon starts up again, he says MGMA hopes legislators will "try to make sure that oncology payments were appropriate in relation to anything that happens with the AWP levels."