

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

PHYSICIAN NOTES: Senate Lacks Votes to Change Medicare Payment Structure, But Members Vow to Keep Trying

Plus: CMS heads closer to defining 'meaningful use,' but official definition won't be issued until late 2009.

Senators have many fights in front of them these days when it comes to health care, but the most important issue to Part B providers has not been solved just yet.

Last week, Senate majority leader **Harry Reid (D-Nev.)** helped shepherd a bill that would have changed the Medicare payment formula, thus permanently stopping the cuts that physicians face each year in Medicare payments. The bill failed to pass after some senators questioned whether the bill's price tag (over \$240 billion) was excessive.

"The reason we have to take care of this so-called doctor fix is that seniors need to be able to have a doctor when they're sick. Medicare patients need to have a doctor when they're ill or hurt," Reid said in a statement on his Web site. Keep your eye on the Insider for more information about legislative moves on this front.