

Eli's Rehab Report

News Briefs: Breathe Easy: No 'Trigger' Pulled on MIPPA Legislation

You shouldn't have to face drastic proposals for Medicare cuts or therapy caps expiring any time soon. In late July, the House of Representatives voted to delay **President Bush's** Medicare trigger bill.

Background: Because Medicare has taken more than 45 percent of its funding from the government's "general revenue," President Bush is legally able to propose a way to cut Medicare spending.

This would essentially allow the president to pull a "trigger" that allows him to reduce overall Medicare spending or increase beneficiaries' premiums.

The House vote ensures that the trigger bill will not take effect this year. Congress members note that the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act, passed in July, decreases Medicare spending so that the 45 percent threshold will not be met, which means that the trigger won't be necessary anyway.

Department of Health and Human Services Secretary **Mike Leavitt** disagreed with the House action, noting, "Democrat House leadership is now actively seeking to silence the alarm bells and prevent any action to address Medicare's underlying solvency problems."