

Eli's Rehab Report

News Briefs: Congress Stretches Fee Schedule Fix a Bit Longer

The monumental healthcare reform legislation was big, but not big enough to fix the physician fee schedule cuts. **The good news:** The president just signed HR 4851 (the Continuing Extension Act) into law, which extends the 2009 [Medicare fee schedule](#) conversion factor through May 31, 2010. So therapy providers billing Medicare can avoid the 21.2 percent cuts for another two months.

Important: The law is retroactive to April 1, points out News Now, the American Physical Therapy Association's weekly newswire. This means that now, claims with dates of service of April 1 and later, which Medicare contractors were holding, are being released for processing and payment.

Statutory payment floors still apply, News Now reminded readers, and, therefore, Medicare contractors cannot pay clean electronic claims before 14 calendar days after the date they are received. And for clean paper claims, you're looking at the usual 29 calendar days.