

## Eli's Rehab Report

### News Briefs: Keep an Eye on National Healthcare Reform

U.S. Sen. **Max Baucus** (D-Mont.) unveiled a whopping healthcare reform plan at a Nov. 12 press conference, which includes several ambitious proposals, such as universal healthcare.

Baucus' plan also includes a number of insurance and delivery system reforms, such as a nationwide insurance pool called the Health Insurance Exchange, according to a press release. Those who already have health coverage could keep what they have, but for those who still need affordable coverage, the Exchange would be a marketplace where Americans could compare and purchase the plans of their choice.

Meanwhile, **Sen. Edward Kennedy** (D-Mass.), who chairs the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, this week announced three new health reform working groups within his committee to deal with insurance coverage reforms, prevention and public health, and improving the quality of care, according to the Nov. 21 edition of PT Bulletin Online.

**The good news:** "Without directly addressing physical therapist services, the plans offer opportunities to address issues related to Medicare fee schedules, direct access, and the therapy cap," the Bulletin pointed out

**The bad news:** "Concerns about financing and budget neutrality are likely to expose providers to potential payment cuts and restrictions," the Bulletin said. In response, APTA is preparing to officially comment on the Baucus proposal and to meet with members of Congress to ensure that physical therapy issues are considered in the healthcare reform.

To view Baucus' proposal, go to <http://finance.senate.gov/healthreform2009/home.html>.