



HEALTHCARE ASSOCIATES in Medicine, PC

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

How to cut health care costs - NOW! (Part 3 of 3)

As the inevitability of health care reform looms in the distance, we at Healthcare Associates in Medicine, PC have argued for the implementation of ideas that could reduce health care costs by \$40 billion over the following decade. Unlike the new proposals discussed by President Obama and his administration, the changes we have advocated for are already available; they just haven't been implemented properly. In the first of step of our three part plan, we urged for the finalization of the National Plan Identifier regulation, a step that could save physician practices almost \$1 billion a year for the next ten years. We have also strongly argued in favor of finalization of National Electronic Claim Attachment regulation, a step that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has frustratingly refused to successfully implement. This element too could save another \$10 billion over the coming years.

What if there was a way to save an additional \$22.2 billion dollars? Well, if we were to require public and private payers to issue machine readable health plan identification cards, that's how much money could be saved. According to the Medical Group Management Association (MGMA), incorrect or unavailable patient information results in 10 to 25 percent of all health insurance claim rejections. If machine readable health plan ID cards were issued, this problem would be eliminated. These cards would be able to accurately transfer the necessary information from the patient to the provider's relevant record systems, thus eliminating the health insurance claim rejections.

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While it will likely take weeks, months and years to implement the reforms proposed by President Obama, the changes we advocate for here will take effect immediately. Any legitimate attempt towards worthwhile health care reform needs to take these factors into account. All three are already part of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996. They have just never been put into full effect. With reform around the corner, now would be the time to finally get these measures in order.

The growing effort to reform health care in the United States is a primary concern for our physicians and the patients we treat. The physicians and staff of Healthcare Associates in Medicine are dedicated to providing every patient with the appropriate care and treatment based on their personal condition. This is accomplished through coordination of service and by aggressively representing each patient's personal circumstances whereby their care is our primary concern.

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