



Address Physician Payment

CREATE A SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION TO MEDICARE PHYSICIAN PAYMENT

While the costs of doing business in the US have skyrocketed, the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule continues to decrease. Podiatric practices, many of which are small or solo practices delivering vital care to vulnerable populations, face unprecedented challenges due to these cuts. APMA calls on Congress to provide relief and to adopt a sustainable payment model that supports small practices and solo practitioners.

Protect Beneficiaries

- Payment cuts threaten access to care for seniors, particularly in underserved and rural areas.
- Medicare payment instability disproportionately affects physicians serving low-income and minority populations.
- The US is facing physician shortages, and ongoing payment cuts only exacerbate those shortages, particularly in underserved areas.

Save Health-care Dollars

- Chronic conditions like diabetes, peripheral artery disease, and wounds—often managed by podiatric physicians—are major cost drivers in Medicare.
- When physician reimbursements decline, fewer physicians can afford to accept Medicare patients, leading to delayed care, higher emergency department utilization, and worse patient outcomes—all of which drive up Medicare spending.
- Increasing payments for primary and specialty care can reduce hospitalizations and emergency room visits.



Short-term patches are not enough—Congress **must** pass a permanent solution. APMA urges Congress to address Medicare payment reform to ensure a sustainable future for Medicare.



Podiatry

DELIVERING VALUE TO THE US HEALTH-CARE SYSTEM

Did you know?

Doctors of podiatric medicine are physicians and surgeons who save limbs and lives. Podiatrists keep Americans on their feet and in the game—and they add substantial value to our health-care system.

Saving Dollars ⁱ



- Among patients with commercial insurance, every \$1 invested in care by a podiatrist results in \$27–\$51 of savings for the health-care delivery system.
- Among Medicare-eligible patients, each \$1 invested results in \$9–\$13 of savings.
- That's an estimated \$10.5 billion in savings over three years if every at-risk patient with diabetes sees a podiatrist.

Avoiding Complications ⁱⁱ



- Medicare-eligible patients with diabetes are less likely to experience a lower-extremity amputation if a podiatrist is a member of the care team.
- A multidisciplinary team approach that includes podiatrists most effectively prevents complications from diabetes and reduces the risk of amputations.

Improving Outcomes ⁱⁱⁱ



- Podiatric surgeons have significantly lower rates of deep-vein thrombosis, unplanned revision surgery, and malunion than other surgeons when conducting open reduction internal fixation of ankle fractures.

apma 
Advancing foot and ankle
medicine and surgery

ⁱ Ginger Carls et al., "The Economic Value of Specialized Lower-Extremity Medical Care by Podiatric Physicians in the Treatment of Diabetic Foot Ulcers," *Journal of the American Podiatric Medical Association* 101 (2011): 93-115, accessible at: www.tinyurl.com/trstudy.
ⁱⁱ Sloan, Frank A et al. "Receipt of care and reduction of lower extremity amputations in a nationally representative sample of U.S. Elderly." *Health services research* vol. 45,6 Pt 1 (2010): 1740-62.
ⁱⁱⁱ Weinraub, Glenn M et al., "Outcomes Following Open Reduction Internal Fixation of Ankle Fractures (ORIF) By Podiatric Surgeons," *The Journal of Foot and Ankle Surgery* 60 (2021): 960-63.



What Is a Podiatrist?

DOCTORS OF PODIATRIC MEDICINE

Did you know?

A podiatrist is a physician and surgeon who treats the foot, ankle, and related structures of the leg.

Why See a Podiatrist?

Feet are complex anatomical structures, all-in-one stabilizers, shock absorbers, and propulsion engines that are instrumental to overall health and well-being. They require expert care. Podiatrists complete rigorous, specialized training in the foot and ankle, making them uniquely qualified to care for this part of the body.

How Are Podiatrists Trained?

Podiatrists complete four years of training in a podiatric medical school and three years of hospital-based residency training. Their training is similar to that of other physicians. Podiatrists often go on to complete fellowship training following their residency. Podiatrists can focus on many fields, including surgery, sports medicine, wound care, pediatrics, and diabetic care.

Are Podiatrists Board-Certified?

Podiatrists can earn board certification with advanced training and clinical experience, after which they must pass a board exam. The American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery and the American Board of Podiatric Medicine are the recognized certifying boards for the field.