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## Illinois Academy of Family Physicians dismayed with unacceptable temporary patch for Medicare

*The following statement is attributed to Patrick A. Tranmer, M.D., president of the Illinois Academy of Family Physicians:*

“Congress responded with yet another short-term patch through November 2010, but physicians agree this proposal is unacceptable. Family physicians will continue agonizing over the financially disastrous reduction in revenue looming on the near horizon. Medicare physicians are currently paying 2010 rates for staff salaries, rent, utilities, supplies and technology, but must accept payment equivalent to 2001 rates. Physicians cannot continue to spend time and energy pleading with Congress this fall. We need to get back to the business of implementing health care reform, adopting new technology and caring for our patients.

The Illinois Academy of Family Physicians only supports the following:

1. Permanent repeal and replacement of the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula
2. A temporary patch that runs until at least December 31, 2012, to allow longer stability while working on a permanent solution acceptable to physicians
3. A separate positive increase specifically for primary care services.

“The family physician community will no longer accept short-sighted fixes with unfulfilled plans for fundamental change down the road. This fall, many family physicians will have to make tough decisions for their practices. Other physicians will have to live with whatever changes their employer makes for them.

“Physicians are losing faith that our lawmakers and the lawmaking process can satisfactorily solve the financial issues related to Medicare. Today I can’t say how many family physicians and all doctors who care for our seniors and military families will continue to provide this critical service to those who need it most.”

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