

ARTICLE ADDENDUM – EPRESCRIBING INCENTIVES AS PART OF MEDICARE BILL

Yesterday the US Senate passed an important bill - the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008, H.R. 6331, which will halt the July 1 physician pay cut under Medicare for the rest of 2008 and provide a 1.1 percent pay increase in 2009.

A key component of this bill are the first ever incentives to encourage the adoption of electronic prescribing technology by prescribers. The Medicare Improvement for Patients and Providers Act will provide positive Medicare payment incentives of up to 2% for practitioners who use qualified e-prescribing systems in 2009 through 2013, and a reduction in payments of up to 2% to providers who fail to e-prescribe by 2012.

These incentives underline the importance being placed on e-prescribing technology to both improve the safety and accuracy of the prescribing process, and to improve the efficiency of practice operations.

To begin realizing all of these benefits as quickly and easily as possible, we encourage members to visit www.GetRxConnected.com/AANP. There, physicians will find urgent information and guidance on how to 'Get Connected' for e-prescribing. Get Connected is supported by <Name> along with the nation's leading medical societies.

Resources found at www.GetRxConnected.com/AANP are equally important for those that have not yet taken steps to acquire e-prescribing technology, and for those that may already be using an electronic medical record (EMR) or e-prescribing system, but have not yet established an electronic connection to pharmacies.

Over 150,000 prescribers across the country use systems can transmit prescriptions electronically, but many do not know it! A free E-Prescribing Readiness Report can confirm the ability of a practice's technology to transmit prescriptions in this way.