



*Supporting Quality Health Care Services at Home*

# Special Alert

July 3, 2002

## **The Home Health Copayment is Very Much Alive in the Senate**

We urge AAHomecare members to call or meet with your two U.S. Senators, and take advantage of their likely appearance at events in your area over the July 4th recess.

The Senate has put Medicare legislation on the fast track and is getting ready to act the week of July 15.

When you talk to your Senators urge them to eliminate the 15 percent reimbursement cut and extend the 10 percent rural add on, just as the House of Representatives voted to do. And although the House rejected a home health copayment, it is NOT dead in the Senate. Your contacts helped turn the tide in the House and can do the same in the Senate.

Ask your Senators to contact Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle or Minority Leader Trent Lott, depending on their party affiliation, as well as members of the Senate Finance Committee on the 15 percent, 10 percent, and especially the copayment issue. They should do this right away.

While Democratic leaders may not be inclined to support a home health copayment, five very influential members of the Senate Finance Committee (Grassley, Snowe, Jeffords, Breaux, Hatch) are circulating a draft "Tripartisan" bill that includes a copayment of \$10.00 for the first five visits of each home health episode in an "Enhanced Medicare Benefits" fee-for-service option. This would be a new "Part E" of Medicare in which beneficiaries could enroll in lieu of traditional fee-for-service Medicare or Medicare+Choice plans.

For talking points in opposition to copayments, visit:

<http://www.aahomecare.org/members/copayment.htm>

All Senate offices can be reached by calling 202-224-3121. If we can provide you with any assistance or you need us to provide follow up here in Washington, please E-mail Seth Johnson ([sethj@aahomecare.org](mailto:sethj@aahomecare.org)) or Ann Howard ([ahoward@aahomecare.org](mailto:ahoward@aahomecare.org)).