

**BLASTFAX**

**Medicaid ACA Payment Increase Ends December 31; Call to Action To Advocate for Continuation in State Budget**

On December 31<sup>st</sup>, the Medicaid Payment Increase mandated by the federal Affordable Care Act (ACA) will end. The ACA increased Medicaid physician payment rates for primary care services to those paid by Medicare for calendar years 2013 and 2014. In Georgia, these increased rates were paid both by Medicaid FFS and by the Medicaid CMO's. The increases were funding entirely with federal funds provided in the ACA.

Now that federal funds have expired, the Georgia AAP will advocate to the Governor and General Assembly to maintain these rates by adding state funds to the Medicaid budget. Absent action at either the federal or state level, the rates will revert to 2012 levels, which had been unchanged since 1999.

The national AAP is lobbying this issue with Congress for federal action, but no bill is expected there until late spring.

**That shifts the action now to the Georgia state legislature**, and this is where the Georgia AAP and you come in. Getting the General Assembly, which convenes on January 12, to add these needed funds into the Medicaid budget will not be an easy task, but it can be done, if every pediatrician and pediatric subspecialists who see Medicaid patients will contact their state representative(s) and state senator(s) in January and urge them to support maintaining these Medicaid payments.

What you can do NOW.

1. Know who your state representatives and state senator is. This may include more than one as you can use your home address, your practice address, and the areas from which you draw patients.
2. If you do not know, visit the Georgia AAP website ([www.gaaap.org](http://www.gaaap.org)) and select the drop down bar "Advocacy" and click on "Legislative." We have a website there that will give you the names of your state senator and state representative. If you're using a tablet to access our website, go to the "Site Map" and search "Legislative."
3. If you already know your representatives and see or talk to them over the holiday period, let them know that maintaining the Medicaid-Medicare parity will be of major concern to you in the upcoming session; and you will provide them with more information.

We will soon be posting talking points on our website, so please check in there for more information. For additional information or questions, contact Rick Ward at the Georgia AAP office. Thank you.

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