Dear Colleague:

We want you to know the highlights of the Academy's regulatory advocacy and the latest updates in business of medicine affecting the specialty and your patients. The Physician Payment Policy Workgroup (3P), led by Co-Chairs Richard Waguespack, MD and Michael Setzen, MD, along with your AAO-HNS Health Policy Team, are working hard on your behalf to advocate for you on socioeconomic and practice affairs issues. Read below for the latest socioeconomic and practice affairs news.

**Advocacy**

**Academy Meets with United Healthcare on “Direct to Consumer” Hearing Aids**

On January 30th, Academy leadership, physician representatives, an audiologist, and staff and representatives met with United Healthcare to express their concerns over the accuracy of the online hearing testing currently being offered in roll-out states and ensuring patients receive appropriate otolaryngic physician oversight. For more information, visit the Private Payer Advocacy page [here](http://tinyurl.com/2d4sq6y).

**Academy Submits Comments on 2012 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS) Final Rule**

On January 3rd, the Academy submitted comments to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) regarding the 2012 MPFS final rule. To see the Academy’s comments on the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR), potentially misvalued codes, and quality reporting initiatives, click here [http://tinyurl.com/2d4sq6y](http://tinyurl.com/2d4sq6y).

**Academy Releases Balloon Ostial Dilatation Appeal Template Letter**

Have you had an entire surgical session for CPT code 31295-31297 (*Nasal/sinus endoscopy. Surgical*) denied? The Physician Payment Policy workgroup has drafted an appeal template letter which members may use to appeal their denials. See the appeal template letter here [http://www.entnet.org/Practice/Appeal-Template-letters.cfm](http://www.entnet.org/Practice/Appeal-Template-letters.cfm).

**Business of Medicine**

**Submit 2011 PQRS Data through February 17**

PQRwizard is a new tool available to Academy members to report quality measure data to CMS under the 2011 Physician Quality Reporting System incentive program. PQRwizard is a simple and cost-effective tool to collect and report quality measure data. The deadline to submit 2011 data through PQRwizard is February 17. [More](http://www.entnet.org/Practice/Appeal-Template-letters.cfm).

**Guidance for Otolaryngologists on 2012 CPT Changes to Sub-Specialty New Patient E/M Billing**

For 2012, CPT language was changed to indicate that two sub-specialists of the same overall specialty may bill for a new patient E/M in situations where they see the same patient. For further guidance, email healthpolicy@entnet.org. For more details, see the [CPT codes for 2012 page](http://www.entnet.org/Practice/Appeal-Template-letters.cfm).

**HHS Announces Additional Year to Meet Stage 2 Meaningful Use Criteria**

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced it will delay Stage 2 of the Medicare/ Medicaid electronic health record (EHR) incentive program from 2013 to 2014 for those who meet Stage 1 requirements in 2011. For more information on EHR Meaningful Use Criteria, visit the Academy’s webpage at [http://www.entnet.org/Practice/ONC.cfm](http://www.entnet.org/Practice/ONC.cfm).

**Electronic Health Records (EHR) Incentive Program**

The last day for eligible professionals to register and attest “meaningful use” of EHR to receive incentive payments for calendar year 2011 is February 29. For more on EHR incentives, visit the CMS website [here](http://www.entnet.org/Practice/ONC.cfm).

**Are You Version 5010 Compliant?**

Last December, CMS announced a three month grace period from enforcing Version 5010 HIPAA transaction. The compliance date for the use of Version 5010 transactions was January 1st, but CMS will not enforce transactions until March 31st. Visit the CMS site on the Version 5010 transition at [https://www.cms.gov/ICD10/11a_Version_5010.asp](https://www.cms.gov/ICD10/11a_Version_5010.asp).

**RUC Survey: CPT Code 31231 Received Unprecedented Response from Members**

Thank you to all members who have provided input on CPT Code 31231. The survey was conducted to determine the frequency of use for this service and whether any changes may be needed in the Current Procedural Terminology manual. We will use the results to improve future CPT updates. For more information on the RUC process and to participate in future surveys, visit the [RUC website](http://www.entnet.org/Practice/RUC.cfm).
The RUC survey for CPT Code 31231 closed on Tuesday with an unprecedented response rate from members that perform Diagnostic Nasal Endoscopy’s. The Physician Payment Policy Workgroup (3P) and the entire Health Policy team would like to thank everyone that responded and completed this crucial survey.

For more Health Policy news, see the Bulletin online (login required) or visit http://www.entnet.org/Practice/CMS-News.cfm.

Upcoming Coding Workshops
Las Vegas, NV Feb 17-18

AAO-HNS Coding Hotline
The Academy offers a coding hotline as a free service to members of the Academy. If you have coding questions or need guidance, this resource can help you!
1-800-584-773
9 am – 6 pm EST Monday through Friday

Sincerely,

Rodney P. Lusk, MD
President, American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery