

## **FEDERATED AMBULATORY SURGERY ASSOCIATION**

### **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **FASA RESPONDS TO MEDPAC'S REPORT TO CONGRESS**

The Federated Ambulatory Surgery Association (FASA) expresses disappointment in the report to Congress entitled "Medicare Payment for Post-surgical Recovery Care Centers" issued by Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) today. MedPAC is an independent federal body that advises the US Congress on issues affecting the Medicare program. "Currently, citizens of 34 states have access to recovery care, but Medicare patients in all states are denied coverage for a safe and cost-effective alternative to a hospital stay. We believe a more thorough study would have resulted in a recommendation for Medicare coverage for recovery care or at least a demonstration project," said FASA President Robert C Williams of Phoenix, AZ. "Such a demonstration would have shown the benefits Medicare beneficiaries could receive from expanded access to ASCs." In addition to serving as FASA's elected president, Mr. Williams is a Senior Development Executive for Johnson and Johnson Health Care Systems Inc. Mr. Williams resides in Flagstaff, Arizona.

Recognizing that the Congressional timeframe for the report was extremely tight, FASA is disappointed that MedPAC did not ask for an extension as FASA recommended so that MedPAC could have undertaken a more thorough study of this complex issue before the final report was issued. "While we think this report is an excellent start in an extremely complicated area, in our view, there are several areas that could be clarified and the analysis improved to give a more fair and accurate picture," said FASA Executive Director Kathy Bryant in FASA's comments.

With Medicare's escalating costs and the cost concerns of our nation's elderly, we are disappointed that ASCs will not have the opportunity to do all they can to reduce health care expenditures for Medicare beneficiaries," says Kathy Bryant.

Although FASA has not had the opportunity to review the final report they did comment on the draft report. FASA was disappointed by the comments in the draft report that if a procedure is covered in a hospital then there is no reason to cover it in other settings. MedPAC gives no reason to deny patient choice, and therefore patient choice should be respected. The government has recognized how much money the Medicare program has saved through Medicare beneficiaries using ASCs. There is no reason to deny a service in one setting simply because it can be obtained in another.

To obtain a copy of FASA's comments regarding the draft report to Congress entitled "Medicare Payment for Post-surgical Recovery Care Centers" contact the FASA office at (703) 836-8808 or by email at ASC@ascassociation.org.