

# “Securing Access Via Excellence (SAVE) Medicare Home Health Act”

Protecting Medicare’s Home Health Benefit for America’s Seniors

## THE ISSUE

On January 1, 2014, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) began imposing a deep cut to Medicare home health services totaling 14% over the years 2014-2017. This unprecedented cut has already resulted in negative consequences for homebound seniors and home health professionals across the U.S. CMS itself has admitted that this cut will cause “approximately 40 percent” of all home health agencies – most of which are small businesses – to suffer net losses by 2017. According to analyses by Avalere Health, such an outcome would put 1.3 million American seniors and 465,000 home health professionals at risk.

Today, 3.5 million seniors and disabled individuals depend on the Medicare home health benefit for skilled nursing care, physical therapy, speech-language pathology, and occupational therapy services. Avalere Health analyses of federal data show these patients are older, poorer, sicker and more likely to be disabled and of an ethnic or racial minority than all other Medicare beneficiaries combined. Home healthcare is also particularly important to women: Avalere Health has found that 60% of all home health patients are women, 90% of home health professionals are women, and 75% of the family members who manage the care of their aging relatives are women.

Lawmakers, small business leaders & Medicare seniors agree that these cuts could result in harm:

- 200+ Members of Congress have voiced concern that the cuts would have a direct impact on access for millions of seniors, many of whom reside in rural and underserved communities.
- The Small Business Administration has warned CMS that the cuts would have a significant impact on a substantial number of small businesses in the home health sector.
- The Medicare population also overwhelmingly opposes these Medicare cuts. Polling data show that nearly 9 in 10 Medicare-eligible Americans oppose cuts to Medicare’s home health benefit.

## THE SOLUTION

**The SAVE Medicare Home Health Act provides critical relief for Medicare home health beneficiaries, their families, and their skilled providers by repealing the existing across-the-board rebasing cuts and replacing them with savings achieved by reducing hospital readmissions and enabling seniors to remain where they wish to be – in their own homes.**

### Repeals Harmful Medicare Rebasing Payment Cuts

- Repeals the 3.5% per year rebasing cut currently slated to be imposed in 2015, 2016 and 2017
- Requires the HHS Secretary to conduct a detailed analysis of the rebasing cuts pursuant to the Regulatory Flexibility Act, Executive Order 13563, Section 3131 of the Affordable Care Act

### Reduces Spending & Improves the Delivery of Quality Home Healthcare

- Develops new quality measures for home Health services
- Achieves Medicare savings by reducing costly readmissions
- Establishes a home health Value-Based Purchasing (VBP) program
- Rewards home health agency for quality performance
- Increases accountability for home health providers
- Makes home health agency performance data available to consumers

