

## Chapters Take Lead in Fighting Proposed Physician Fee Schedule

**ACC** chapters across the country have made remarkable efforts to mobilize around the drastic cuts to cardiovascular services proposed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) under the proposed 2010 Physician Fee Schedule. As of late-August, more than 4,000 e-mails, faxes, letters and phone calls had been placed to congressional offices across the country. In addition, ACC leadership and staff have made more than 80 visits to congressional offices and CMS. To date, seven opinion pieces have been placed regarding the payment cuts and their impacts on quality and patient access.

Chapters worked hard to mobilize their members and patients. Chapters have sent letters to their entire state congressional delegations and scheduled face-to-face meetings with members of Congress during August recess. The Michigan and Pennsylvania Chapters have hosted “Cardiologist for a Day” events. The Kentucky, Louisiana, Indiana, Maryland and South Carolina Chapters all have events scheduled for the near future. In mobilizing patients, the Delaware Chapter had noteworthy success; in just one week some 400 patients wrote to their lawmakers to protest the proposed rule.

### Florida Rallies Around Cuts

The Florida Chapter sponsored a rally of about 2,500 individuals — including hundreds of cardiovascular professionals — in downtown Orlando on August 21 to protest the proposed rule. Event speakers discussed the devastating effects that the implementation of the rule will have on patients’ access to diagnostic testing and quality of care. On the panel of speakers was U.S. Rep. Alan Grayson (D), who promised he would work to stop the cuts from going into effect.

“The event was a great opportunity to raise the profile in Florida about the effects of the proposed rule. We have to let the public know that this rule is going to majorly affect cardiovascular quality and patients. We needed to take action,” says ACC’s Florida Chapter Gov. **Alberto Montalvo, M.D., F.A.C.C.**

### Creative Thinking in Ohio

The Ohio Chapter of the ACC educated its members about the payment cuts and the overarching need for real health care reform by hosting a food and wine tasting on August 26 in Cincinnati. As a background to their food and wine pairings, attendees viewed “The Case for Reform,” ACC’s video that features the presidential team urging members to voice their opposition to the proposed cuts. The video includes segments on professionalism and patient value, delivery system improvement and payment reform.

Cincinnati-area ACC trustees **Florence Rothenberg, M.D., F.A.C.C.**, and **Sai Hanumanthu, M.D., F.A.C.C.**, sought to bring members together to learn more about the Chapter and hear how the College is advocating on behalf of members. Attendees learned about the current health care reform climate in Washington, D.C., and shared thoughts with ACC staff on the messages to take to Capitol Hill during ACC’s 2009 Legislative Conference, which will be held Sept. 13-15.

In addition to this event, the Chapter has been very active in reaching out to its federal lawmakers and has sent well over 300 e-mails and letters to Congress in opposition to the proposed cuts.



ACC Trustees Florence Rothenberg and Sai Hanumanthu at the Ohio Chapter health care reform event



**1986** The ACC develops its Key Contact program to familiarize College members with federal policies. These early efforts to be involved in federal legislative actions have resulted in a robust Advocacy program today that includes state, federal and payer advocacy and hundreds of member volunteers.