



THE OKLAHOMAN

Congress needs to fix Medicare payments problem

November 1, 2025

Physicians are facing an uphill battle for support within the health care system. Chronic diseases, the number of Medicare beneficiaries, and the cost of running a practice are all on the rise. But what Medicare pays physicians is woefully inadequate, and it threatens Oklahomans' access to care.

Since 2001, Medicare payments to doctors have dropped by a third when adjusted for inflation. For over two decades, doctors have been asked to do more with less, but rising costs and sicker patients are making it harder and harder to do so. As practices navigate healthcare workforce shortages and administrative red tape from insurers, its time for Congress to step up and help our doctors.

I strongly urge Oklahoma Sens. Markwayne Mullin and James Lankford to fight for a policy update that would adjust Medicare physician payments to account for inflation. The Senate has a rare opportunity to fix this problem and give our doctors some much-needed relief.

— *Dr. Latisha Heinlen, Oklahoma City*