

The Acupuncture for Our Seniors Act Fact Sheet July 2021

Summary

On July 29, 2021, U.S. Representative Judy Chu (D-California) introduced *the Acupuncture for Our Seniors Act*. This bill would instruct the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to recognize qualified acupuncturists as Medicare providers. Medicare recognition would enable eligible acupuncturists to provide covered services to Medicare beneficiaries (generally those 65+) without supervision and bill Medicare directly for these services.

Bill Details

- *The Acupuncture for our Seniors Act* would authorize CMS to recognize qualified acupuncturists as Medicare providers.
- Medicare recognition would align Medicare policy with the acupuncturist scope-of-practice laws so acupuncturists could provide care to over 60-million Medicare beneficiaries.
- Medicare-provider status would enable acupuncturists to directly bill Medicare for covered services, and would remove Medicare's current physician-supervision requirement.
- The bill defines 'qualified acupuncturists' as individuals who have state licensure for acupuncture, or certification through a nationally recognized certifying authority, for individuals in states that do not provide acupuncture licensure.

Access to Care

This bill would modernize the Medicare program by providing Medicare provider status to acupuncturists, which would allow Medicare beneficiaries direct access to acupuncturists.

Access to acupuncturists could improve care and wellness by:

- Providing over 60-million Medicare beneficiaries access to acupuncturists.
- Enabling qualified acupuncturists to provide covered services to Medicare beneficiaries.
- Establishing an acupuncture-coverage model for other payers that often follow CMS-coverage policy.

Patient Benefits

The Acupuncture for our Seniors Act would enable qualified acupuncturists to provide patient-centered care to Medicare beneficiaries.

Access to acupuncturists could improve patient outcomes by:

- Providing holistic, non-invasive, evidence-based, non-opioid care to manage acute and chronic pain.
- Enabling access to personalized healthcare and preventive care.
- Integrating acupuncture services within standard healthcare-management plans.

Statement of Support

- The ASA and the NCCAOM support *the Acupuncture for Our Seniors Act*, and encourage policymakers to co-sponsor this bill.
- Look for more information soon from the ASA and the NCCAOM on how you can help support this bill.