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AAOMS applauds legislation enabling Medicare patients to rehabilitate and recover more efficiently from oral and maxillofacial injuries

[Rosemont, IL] The [American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons](#) (AAOMS) applauds the introduction of the “[Medicare Oral Health Rehabilitative Enhancement Act of 2009](#)” (H.R. 1430 IH), which would change current Medicare law that prohibits dentists from referring their Medicare patients for physical therapy. Introduced on March 11, by [Congressman Bill Pascrell, Jr.](#) (D-N.J.) and [Congressman Eric Cantor](#) (R-Va.), H.R. 1430 would allow oral and maxillofacial surgeons and other dentists to refer their patients directly for physical therapy.

Current statute requires they must refer patients to an allopathic or osteopathic physician to establish a therapy plan. The “budget neutral” legislation will actually save money by removing the unnecessary step in obtaining a referral and has the support of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Oral and maxillofacial surgery (OMS)—the surgical specialty of dentistry—regularly treat patients with medical conditions that require physical therapy. These conditions include facial trauma such as jaw fractures, temporomandibular joint (TMJ) disorder and reconstructive procedures. In most cases, these conditions require some form of physical therapy after treatment.

Encouraging and building support for the bill will be a major focus of discussions with members of the U.S. House and Senate during AAOMS’ April 29 Day on the Hill in Washington, DC.

Saving Faces, Changing Lives — The American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (AAOMS), the professional organization representing more than 8,000 oral and maxillofacial surgeons in the United States, supports its fellows’ and members’ ability to practice their specialty through education, research and advocacy. AAOMS fellows and members comply with rigorous continuing education requirements and submit to periodic office examinations, ensuring the public that all office procedures and personnel meet stringent national standards.

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