



## NEWS RELEASE

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### NAEMT ADOPTS POSITION STATEMENT ON MEDICARE REIMBURSEMENT

Clinton, Miss. – The National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT) Board of Directors has approved a new position statement on Medicare Reimbursement.

NAEMT believes it is critical for Congress to ensure that Medicare reimburse EMS services for the average cost of providing high quality prehospital medical services to Medicare patients, as recommended in the May 2007 Government Accounting Office (GAO) report to Congress. Medical services provided by EMS services, including treatment and release of patients (with no transport), treatment and referral, and treatment and transport to other healthcare facilities should be reimbursable under Medicare.

Although the EMS system, the nation's healthcare safety net, is used by an increasing number of patients who rely on Medicare benefits to pay for emergency medical care, Medicare reimbursement to EMS services per transport falls below their costs incurred for providing this care – on average 6% below cost, and 17% below cost in remote or “super rural” areas, according to the GAO.

This is a huge issue of concern, as Medicare is the single largest payer for many EMS services, particularly in rural areas. Medicare's below-cost reimbursement for these services then results in inadequate funding for necessary EMS equipment and training. This discrepancy occurs even though high quality prehospital medical care improves patient outcomes, including Medicare beneficiaries, resulting in a decrease in overall Medicare expenditures, as noted in the December 2009 National EMS Advisory Council report.

"EMS services continue to serve more patients and increase the level of care they provide, with additional equipment and training. However, due to chronically below-cost Medicare

reimbursement, many of these EMS services are facing serious financial crises," says NAEMT President Patrick Moore. "To ensure that paramedics and EMTs can continue to provide the highest level of quality health care, improve EMS patient outcomes, ensure the survival of the EMS system, particularly in rural areas, it is crucial that Medicare adequately reimburses EMS services for their costs."

To view the full position statement, please visit the NAEMT Positions page in the Advocacy section of [www.naemt.org](http://www.naemt.org).

NAEMT is the nation's only professional association representing all EMS practitioners, including paramedics, emergency medical technicians, first responders and other professionals working in pre-hospital emergency medicine. NAEMT members work in all sectors of EMS, including government service agencies, fire departments, hospital-based ambulance services, private companies, industrial and special operations settings, and in the military.

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