

# AAFP urges congress to end federal government shutdown

October 9 2013

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(HealthDay)—The American Association of Family Physicians (AAFP) is urging Congress to end the federal shutdown, according to a statement from the association.

The AAFP notes that, although Medicare and Medicaid programs are not immediately being affected by the shutdown, physicians may begin to experience delays in payment as a result of the federal workforce furlough. In addition, there is insufficient staff available for processing disability coverage applications, which may result in gaps in insurance coverage and health insecurity. Physicians who interact with the Agency for Health Care Research and Quality may experience challenges, with 92 percent of staff furloughed.

However, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) provision that brings

Medicaid rates for [primary care](#) services up to at least Medicare levels remains in place, and those payments will continue. Primary care Medicare incentive payments will also be paid, and meaningful use payments for [health information technology](#) adoption will continue. Funding for the ACA expansion of Medicaid eligibility is also secure, as are most provisions of the ACA, including the health insurance marketplaces.

"Americans' access to safe food, public health department services, and Medicare coverage should not be jeopardized by ongoing efforts to defund or delay implementation of the Affordable Care Act," AAFP president Reid Blackwelder, M.D., said in a statement. "While funds for important health-related services dry up, implementation of the ACA continues with the mandatory funding embedded in the law."

**More information:** [More Information](#)

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Citation: AAFP urges congress to end federal government shutdown (2013, October 9) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-10-aafp-urges-congress-federal-shutdown.html>

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