

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 3911

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare Program for surgical first assisting services of certified registered nurse first assistants.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 14, 2000

Mr. COLLINS (for himself, Mr. NORWOOD, Mr. HOEKSTRA, Mr. GREENWOOD, Mr. ENGLISH, Mr. DEAL of Georgia, Mr. FOLEY, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mr. WISE, Mr. GOSS, Mrs. CAPPS, and Mr. McDERMOTT) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare Program for surgical first assisting services of certified registered nurse first assistants.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Medicare Certified
3 Registered Nurse First Assistant Direct Reimbursement
4 Act of 2000”.

5 **SEC. 2. MEDICARE COVERAGE OF SURGICAL FIRST ASSIST-**
6 **ING SERVICES OF CERTIFIED REGISTERED**
7 **NURSE FIRST ASSISTANTS.**

8 (a) SERVICES COVERED.—Section 1861(s)(2) of the
9 Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x(s)(2)) is amended—

10 (1) by striking “and” at the end of subpara-
11 graph (S);

12 (2) by striking the period at the end of (T) and
13 inserting “; and”; and

14 (3) by adding at the end the following new sub-
15 paragraph:

16 “(U) surgical first assisting services (as defined
17 in subsection (uu)(1)) furnished by a certified reg-
18 istered nurse first assistant (as defined in subsection
19 (uu)(2)).”.

20 (b) SERVICES DESCRIBED.—Section 1861 of the So-
21 cial Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x) is amended by adding
22 at the end the following new subsection:

23 “Surgical First Assisting Services; Certified Registered
24 Nurse First Assistant

25 “(uu)(1) The term ‘surgical first assisting services’
26 means services consisting of first assisting a physician

1 with surgery and related preoperative, intraoperative, and
2 postoperative care (as determined by the Secretary) fur-
3 nished by a certified registered nurse first assistant (as
4 defined in paragraph (2)) which the certified registered
5 nurse first assistant is legally authorized to perform by
6 the State in which the services are performed.

7 “(2) The term ‘certified registered nurse first assist-
8 ant’ means an individual who—

9 “(A) is a registered nurse and is licensed to
10 practice nursing in the State in which the surgical
11 first assisting services are performed;

12 “(B) has completed a minimum of 2,000 hours
13 of first assisting a physician with surgery and re-
14 lated preoperative, intraoperative, and postoperative
15 care; and

16 “(C) is certified as a registered nurse first as-
17 sistant by an organization recognized by the Sec-
18 retary.”.

19 (c) PAYMENT AMOUNT.—Section 1833(a)(1) of the
20 Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395l(a)(1)) is amended—

21 (1) by striking “and” before “(S)”; and

22 (2) by inserting before the semicolon at the end
23 the following: “, and (T) with respect to surgical
24 first assisting services (as defined in section
25 1861(uu)(1)) furnished by a certified registered

1 nurse first assistant (as defined in section
2 1861(uu)(2)), the amount paid shall be 80 percent
3 of the lesser of the actual charge for the services or
4 85 percent of the amount determined under the fee
5 schedule established under section 1848(b) for the
6 same services if furnished by a physician”.

7 (d) PAYMENTS TO EMPLOYERS.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1833(r) of the So-
9 cial Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395l(r)) is amended—

10 (A) in paragraph (1), by inserting “or sec-
11 tion 1861(s)(2)(U) (relating to surgical first as-
12 sisting services)” after “clinical nurse specialist
13 services”;

14 (B) in paragraph (2), by striking
15 “1861(s)(2)(K)(ii)” and inserting
16 “1861(s)(2)(K)(ii) or 1861(s)(2)(U)”.

17 (2) APPLICATION OF MANDATORY ASSIGNMENT
18 RULES.—Section 1842(b)(18)(C)(i) of such Act (42
19 U.S.C. 1395u(b)(18)(C)(i)) is amended by striking
20 “physician assistant, nurse practitioner, clinical
21 nurse specialist” and inserting “physician assistant,
22 nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist, or cer-
23 tified registered nurse first assistant”.

24 (3) EXCLUSION FROM BUNDLED PAYMENTS
25 FOR COVERED SKILLED NURSING FACILITY SERV-

1 ICES.—Section 1888(e)(2)(A)(ii) of such Act (42
2 U.S.C. 1395yy(e)(2)(A)(ii)) is amended by inserting
3 “surgical first assisting services of a certified reg-
4 istered nurse first assistant,” after “services of a
5 certified registered nurse anesthetist,”.

6 (e) REDUCTION IN PAYMENTS TO AVOID DUPLICATE
7 PAYMENT.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law,
8 the Secretary of Health and Human Services may reduce
9 the amount of payments otherwise made to hospitals
10 under title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.
11 1395 et seq.) to eliminate estimated duplicate payments
12 for historical or current costs attributable to surgical first
13 assisting services furnished by certified registered nurse
14 first assistants as described in section 1861(uu) of such
15 Act (as added by subsection (a)).

16 (f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
17 this section shall apply to services furnished on or after
18 the date of the enactment of this Act.

19 **SEC. 3. STUDY OF PAYMENT RATES.**

20 Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-
21 ment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human
22 Services shall submit to Congress a report containing rec-
23 ommendations for adjustments to the payment amounts
24 established under part B of title XVIII of the Social Secu-
25 rity Act for surgical first assisting services furnished by

1 certified registered nurse first assistants (as described in
2 section 1861(uu) of such Act (as added by section 1(a))
3 to ensure that the payment amounts reflect the approxi-
4 mate costs of furnishing such services, taking into account
5 the costs of compensation, overhead, and supervision at-
6 tributable to certified registered nurse first assistants.

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