



ADVOCACY UPDATE

June 16, 2021

A 9% Cut to Surgical Care

Surgeons and the care they provide are facing another round of devastating cuts that will harm patients. While we delayed the most drastic cuts in 2020, last year's action by Congress was only a temporary fix that did not offer a long-term solution for patients. **Surgical care may see a nearly 9% cut unless there is another fix.**

Surgical care faces two different types of cuts at the end of the year:

1. Delayed payment cuts to surgical care ordered by CMS go into effect.
2. Federal laws to curb spending (known as "Sequestration" and PAYGO) that automatically cut payments.

These combined cuts equal nearly 9% if not fixed by Congress. Patients need a health care system that invests in surgical care, not one that threatens it year after year.

In the coming weeks and months, we will be reaching out to you for your testimony, support, and advocacy to make our voices heard in the halls of Congress to stop these cuts.

SIGN UP

Stop the Cuts



We're Back: Continuing the Fight to Protect Patient Care

One year ago, the Surgical Care Coalition was formed to advocate for patients and stop harmful cuts to surgical care. Unfortunately, while we successfully advocated for patients, cuts to surgical care are back and may harm access to surgical care even further.

Please [take action and share this newsletter](#) with your colleagues to help educate them about the cuts to surgical care. It is time to make your voices heard again.

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Dr. Tomoaki Kato: “I thought I was going to be fine.”

The New York Times published an [in-depth profile](#) of Dr. Tomoaki Kato, who contracted COVID-19 while performing life-saving surgery on the frontlines of the pandemic in March 2020. Dr. Kato, the Surgical Director of Adult and Pediatric Liver and Intestinal Transplantation at NewYork-Presbyterian/Columbia University Irving Medical Center, continued operating on patients even as the pandemic surged in New York City—many of his patients simply could not afford to delay their procedures.

He contracted COVID-19 in late March and soon became “one of the sickest patients in his own hospital,” reportedly coming close to death “many, many times.”

Thankfully, Dr. Kato made a full recovery and continues serving NewYork Presbyterian and the broader patient community by working on his organization that recruits surgeons to provide liver transplants to children in Latin America.

[READ DR. KATO'S STORY](#)



Surgical Care Coalition Applauds Confirmation of New CMS Administrator

The Surgical Care Coalition welcomed the confirmation of Chiquita Brooks-LaSure as Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on May 25.

American College of Surgeons Executive Director David B. Hoyt, MD, FACS, was quoted in [Fierce Healthcare's](#) coverage of the confirmation saying, "Ms. Brooks-LaSure is a tireless advocate for improving health equity and access to quality care. Surgeons across the country look forward to working with CMS leadership and the entire Biden-Harris administration on advocating for patients and improving access to high-quality surgical care."

In the [RAC Monitor](#), John K. Ratliff, MD, FAANS, Chair of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) and the Congress of Neurological Surgeons (CNS) Washington Committee emphasized, "Chiquita Brooks-LaSure has a track record of addressing our nation's most significant health care challenges. Her deep experience and commitment to improving health care on behalf of patients are needed as our country faces many significant health care policy decisions during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond."

