

The Society of Thoracic Surgeons

# STS Advocacy Monthly

April 2017

The Society of Thoracic Surgeons is pleased to present this issue of *STS Advocacy Monthly*, an e-newsletter with the latest and most important legislative and regulatory news relevant to cardiothoracic surgery. If you have comments or suggestions, please e-mail [advocacy@sts.org](mailto:advocacy@sts.org).

## **Society Comments on Delayed CABG Bundle**

STS has [submitted comments on a decision](#) by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to delay implementation of a rule that would create a mandatory bundled payment for coronary artery bypass grafting surgery in certain areas of the country. The Society expressed appreciation for the delay, but also noted its continued objection to the mandatory nature of the program and suggested other ways to improve the program, such as by combining the clinical information in the STS National Database with claims data.

## **STS Joins Letters on Data Collection, Tobacco Policy, CMMI**

The Society recently signed multiorganizational letters that:

- Asked Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Tom Price, MD and CMS Administrator Seema Verma to [clarify new data collection requirements](#) relating to the 10- and 90-day global surgical periods. The letter requested that CMS share a detailed plan for data validation and assure providers that claims submitted with the required data are correctly processed and paid. Previous STS advocacy efforts helped limit the scope of the data collection from every physician in every state to only a sample of physicians in nine states.
- Urged House and Senate Appropriations Committee leaders to [reject policy riders](#) that would exclude certain tobacco products from Food and Drug Administration oversight, as well as cut the budget for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Office on Smoking and Health by 50%;
- Requested that HHS Secretary Price consider the core principles of the Healthcare Leaders for Accountable Innovation in Medicare (AIM), a coalition that was established to encourage oversight of the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation and support its mission of developing value-driven health care payment models. STS joined the steering committee of the AIM Coalition last year.

## **Society Supports March for Science**

STS joined a group of leading organizations representing clinicians, laboratory researchers, and physician-scientists committed to improving patient care in a [statement of support for the March for Science](#) and its nonpartisan call for the appreciation of scientific evidence, education, and investment. The March took place this past Saturday, April 22, in cities across the country and around the world.



*Left: A large crowd gathered for the March for Science in Washington, DC.  
Right: STS Government Relations Assistant Madeleine Stirling (right) attended the March.*

### **Key Contact Connect**

#### **What You Can Gain From Participating in STS Advocacy**

A [column in the spring issue of STS News](#) by STS member and 2016 Key Contact of the Year Jess L. Thompson III, MD described his experience participating in an STS Legislative Fly-In and meeting with his legislators on Capitol Hill, hosting his Representative for a site visit at his hospital, and why it's so important that STS members be involved in advocacy efforts.

Learn more about the [Society's next Fly-In](#), June 12-13 in Washington DC, and RSVP by e-mailing [advocacy@sts.org](mailto:advocacy@sts.org).

#### **Contribute Today to STS-PAC**

So far this year, STS-PAC has raised \$53,860 from 118 STS members. The STS-PAC Board of Advisors has set an ambitious goal of raising \$200,000 in 2017. If you would like to see your name up on the wall at the 2018 STS Annual Meeting, [make your contribution today](#).

### Help Meet Our 2017 Goal

