

# Medicare Maladies

A Series that Exposes the Dangerous Elements of the Medicare Bill currently in Committee

## MM #51: What They Don't Teach Students In Med School

It has come to this: Many doctors and their staffs can now attend a Medicare “boot camp” to learn how to fill out the program’s forms correctly.

The “boot camp” is offered in Rockville, Md., to help physicians become “armed with the training and tools to file accurate and complete claims” for Medicare. And unfortunately, many doctors need it, Heritage Foundation health-care expert Robert Moffit says.

Doctors requesting reimbursement through Medicare’s “Part B” program must fill out three insurance forms from the Medicare bureaucracy, Moffit says. The brief instructions available on Medicare’s Web site amount to more than 150 typed pages of instructions and codes. The three forms also require medical information corresponding to specific codes that fill more than 93 different blanks, and use three different coding systems.

It says a lot about Medicare when a medical practitioner, who can recite mountains of medical information instantly, needs to take a class to correctly fill out its forms. The good news is that Title IX of the recently-passed House Medicare bill offers some regulatory relief for doctors and other medical professionals. But the Senate Medicare bill offers none. Maybe senators should go to “boot camp” with the doctors. Then they all could learn how Medicare bureaucracy really works and understand why the program needs real comprehensive reform.

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(“Medicare Maladies” is a regular feature, launched 7/14/03, from The Heritage Foundation. Sad to say, there’s another malady coming your way tomorrow. Daily “maladies” are also available on [heritage.org](http://heritage.org).)