

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 6445

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve coverage of audiology services under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 17, 2023

Mr. BILIRAKIS (for himself, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. MACE, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. TRONE, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. COHEN, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. FOSTER, and Mr. POCAN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and 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 improve coverage of audiology services under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

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

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Medicare Audiology
5 Access Improvement Act of 2023”.

1 **SEC. 2. COVERAGE OF AUDIOLOGY SERVICES UNDER THE**
2 **MEDICARE PROGRAM.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1861(s)(2) of the Social
4 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x(s)(2)) is amended—

5 (1) in subparagraph (JJ), by striking the semi-
6 colon at the end and inserting “; and”; and

7 (2) by adding at the end the following new sub-
8 paragraph:

9 “(KK) audiology services (as defined in sub-
10 section (ll)(3));”; and

11 (b) IMPROVED ACCESS TO AUDIOLOGY SERVICES.—

12 Paragraph (3) of section 1861(ll) of the Social Security
13 Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x(ll)) is amended to read as follows:

14 “(3) The term ‘audiology services’ means such hear-
15 ing and balance assessment services furnished on or before
16 December 31, 2024, and beginning January 1, 2025, such
17 diagnostic or treatment services furnished by a qualified
18 audiologist which the qualified audiologist is legally au-
19 thorized to perform under State law (or the regulatory
20 mechanism provided by State law), as would otherwise be
21 covered if furnished by a physician or as incident to a phy-
22 sician’s service. A qualified audiologist shall be permitted
23 to furnish such audiology services without regard to any
24 requirement that the individual receiving such audiology
25 services is under the care of (or referred by) a physician
26 or other health care practitioner or that such services are

1 furnished under the supervision of a physician or other
2 health care practitioner.”.

3 (c) PAYMENT AMOUNT AND COINSURANCE.—Section
4 1833(a)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.
5 1395l(a)(1)) is amended—

6 (1) by striking “and” before (HH); and

7 (2) by inserting the following before the semi-
8 colon: “and (II) with respect to audiology services
9 furnished under section 1861(s)(2)(KK), the
10 amounts paid shall be 80 percent of the lesser of the
11 actual charge for the services or the fee schedule
12 amount provided under section 1848”.

13 (d) PAYMENT ON ASSIGNMENT-RELATED BASIS.—
14 Section 1842(b)(18)(C) of the Social Security Act (42
15 U.S.C. 1395u(b)(18)(C)) is amended by adding at the end
16 the following new clause:

17 “(ix) A qualified audiologist (as de-
18 fined in section 1861(ll)(4)(B)).”.

19 (e) INCLUSION OF QUALIFIED AUDIOLOGISTS AS
20 RHC AND FQHC PRACTITIONERS.—Section
21 1861(aa)(1)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.
22 1395x(aa)(1)(B)) is amended by inserting “by a qualified
23 audiologist (as defined in subsection (ll)(4)(B)),” after
24 “(as defined in subsection (hh)(1)),”.

1 (f) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in the
2 amendments made by this section shall be construed to
3 expand the scope of audiologist services or services for
4 which payment may be made to other providers under title
5 XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.)
6 beyond those services for which such payment may be
7 made as of December 31, 2024.

8 (g) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
9 this section shall apply to items and services furnished on
10 or after January 1, 2025.

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