

# Creating a Fairer Physician Payment System: Suggestions from Primary Care Physicians

**Background:** Family physicians have lower incomes than most other physicians, which discourages medical students from choosing primary care fields. The failure of the current CMS physician payment system has been identified as one of the important contributing factors to a decrease in physicians choosing primary care as a career.

**Study Aims:** In this study, we will explore family physicians' perceptions of the current CMS system and what principals should guide an improved system.

**Subjects:** Family physicians who are teachers in the Residency Research Network of Texas (RRNeT), or community family physicians with relevant information to share.

**Design:** This is a qualitative study of the physician payment system. Investigators seek narrative stories that illustrate ways that the current system does and does not fairly pay family physicians for their work. While investigators expect that family physician participants will report about deficiencies in the current system, investigators will also seek contradictory cases – for example, stories where family physicians are allowed to bill for more than they should. Medical students will collect narratives – 'stories' - from five physicians at each RRNeT site and surrounding community..