

STELLAR GOOD NEWS

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Stellar Software

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Stellar Updates

Some recent changes and updates to Stellar (go to the Help menu in Stellar and click Download Stellar Update for the complete list):

Patient Payment Report

New program under Reports/Transaction Reports that lists patient payments.

Main Menu, Network Loader

Improved network start-up loading time, added caching program to improve network speed.

Electronic Special Claims

Can now specify an ICN/DCN reference number when submitting C/R/V claims.

Letters, Special Lists

Added macros for patient diagnosis.

Appointments, Visit Sheets

Added patient gender to New Patient screens.

Multi-Column Appointments

Show Closed Shifts now remembers its setting.

DCPowerNotes Interface

Added bi-directional interface support for DCPowerNotes documentation system (www.claken.com).

Backup

Fixed backup failure if source is a drive letter (such as S:\).

Healthcare Reform

The text of the healthcare reform bills that the senate may be voting on this weekend (March 21) is supposedly online for public perusal (if you can call it that; it's

more like code-breaking). The senate web page for active bills can be found at:
<http://tinyurl.com/28lgf>

The text appears to be available for S.1796 (Baccus bill), S.1679 (Harkin bill), H.R.3590 (Wrangel bill) and H.R.3962 (Dingel bill) if you feel like breaking out your secret legal mumbo-jumbo decoder rings and settling in for some weekend reading. (Don't print it, or you'll kill a tree. Literally.)

House Passes Insurance Antitrust Bill

From *DOTmed.com*, by Astrid Fiano

The House of Representatives has passed H.R. 4626, the Health Insurance Industry Fair Competition Act, a bill to restore the application of federal antitrust laws to the health insurance industry. The bill passed with bipartisan support 406 to 19. The legislation was introduced by Congresspersons Tom Perriello (D-VA) and Betsy Markey (D-CO), with 64 other co-sponsors.

The text of the bill states that, in amending the McCarran-Ferguson Act of 1945, "Nothing contained in this Act shall modify, impair, or supersede the operation of any of the antitrust laws with respect to the business of health insurance." The McCarran-Ferguson Act of 1945 allows state law to regulate the insurance business without federal government pre-emption.

"I'm proud of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for standing up for a common sense bill," Rep. Markey said in a press release

after the vote. "Long ago, the insurance industry got a special deal from Washington. Big health insurance companies could conspire with each other to fix prices, divide territories and never be punished for it. It's wrong, and this bill fixes it once and for all."

Read the rest at:

<http://www.dotmed.com/news/story/11796>

Senate Puts off Medicare Cuts Till October

From DOTmed.com, by Barbara Kram

The Senate voted Wednesday [March 10] to delay the 2010 cut in Medicare physician reimbursement. The 21% reduction was to go into effect March 1 till a vote last Tuesday put it off till the end of March. Yesterday's follow-up means the cut will take effect October 1. The House of Representatives had already endorsed a postponement so now the proposal goes back to the House to prepare a bill for the president's signature. But the fix is only a temporary stay in executing drastic pay cuts to American doctors.

"[Wednesday], the U.S. Senate voted to again delay this year's steep 21 percent Medicare physician payment cut to October 1, pushing the problem off into the near future," said J. James Rohack, M.D., President, American Medical Association. "If the House adopts this Senate bill, America's seniors and their physicians will be left in limbo, and access to health care for Medicare patients will continue to be in grave danger. Physicians cannot keep their practice doors open to all Medicare patients without clear direction from Congress on Medicare payment rates."

Read the rest at:

<http://www.dotmed.com/news/story/11948>

McCain bill threatens access to vitamins and supplements

From NaturalNews.com, by Ethan Huff

Senator John McCain (R-Arizona) has introduced a new bill called The Dietary Supplement Safety Act (DSSA) of 2010 (S. 3002), that, if enacted, would severely curtail free access to dietary supplements.

Cosponsored by Senator Byron Dorgan (D-North Dakota), the bill would essentially give the FDA full control over the supplement industry.

Most of the industrialized world has incredibly restrictive laws governing supplements. People worldwide often purchase supplements from the U.S. because they are freely available at low

costs.

All of this could change, however, if DSSA passes. DSSA would change key sections of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FD&C), undoing protections in the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA) of 1994, effectively eliminating free access to supplements.

The importance of DSHEA

The passage of DSHEA resulted from millions of Americans who worked hard to reinforce their freedom to buy and sell supplements. At the time, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) was alleging that nutrients like CoQ10 and selenium were dangerous and should be pulled from the market.

Though weak in some areas, DSHEA established a foundation upon which free access to dietary supplements would be protected from attacks by drug companies and the FDA.

Read the rest at:

http://www.naturalnews.com/028257_Senator_McCain_dietary_supplements.html

America's Deadliest Sweetener Betrays Millions, Then Hoodwinks You With Name Change

From Mercola.com

Aspartame producer Ajinomoto is launching a new initiative that will rebrand the sweetener as "AminoSweet".

Aspartame is used in many foods and beverages marketed as low calorie or sugar-free. However, its reputation has been clouded somewhat by studies that have investigated reports of ill effects.

Just to remind you, the side effects of aspartame can include:

- * Headache
- * Change in vision
- * Convulsions and seizures
- * Hallucination
- * Nausea and vomiting
- * Joint pain

It can cause many, many other problems as well.

Read the rest at:

<http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2010/03/02/old-monsanto-food-toxin-disguised-under-new-name.aspx>