Covid-19 Pushes DXA Providers to the Breaking Point
Patient Lives at Risk

“During the pandemic, my mom fell and had a painful vertebral fracture requiring hospitalization and now rehab. Covid has really complicated the situation here in Connecticut and made the concept of nursing home care very scary. According to data from the State Department of Public Health, almost 70% of the state’s covid related deaths have occurred in nursing homes. Unfortunately, we had no option.” —Tricia, CT

Osteoporosis is a disease that leads to fractures with everyday activity

DXA (dual energy x-ray absorptiometry) is the gold standard for diagnosing and treating osteoporosis. It is more powerful at predicting fractures than cholesterol is in predicting myocardial infarction or blood pressure in predicting stroke.

Medicare began DXA reimbursement cuts in 2007. Since then, payment cuts have exceeded 70%. 1/3 of DXA office providers have stopped testing.

Since 2008, 4.4 million fewer older women have had a DXA scan leading to a sharp decline in diagnosis and treatment.

The 20-year trend of declining hip fractures stopped in 2013.

Osteoporotic fractures make up 41% of all hospitalizations in older women.

According to Johns Hopkins Medicine, 1 in 3 people who lived independently before a hip fracture spend a year or more in a nursing home afterward. 40% of hip fracture sufferers are unable to walk independently a year later.

Admission to a nursing home following a fracture may have life threatening consequences. Nursing home fatalities account for 42% of all covid-related deaths in the U.S.

Please support HR 3517 and S. 1943 to increase access to osteoporosis testing for Medicare beneficiaries.

1 Pau D. Miller, Carol Zapalowski et al., The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism, Volume 84, Issue 6, June 1, 1999, Pages 1867,1871, Https://doi.org/10.1210/jcem.84.6.5710 • 2Braid-Forbes Health Research, LLC, Carrier 5% SAF and Inpatient 100% SAF, 2019 analysis by Peter M. Steven, PhD • 3Braid-Forbes Health Research, LLC, Carrier 5% SAF and Inpatient 100% SAF, 2019 analysis by Peter M. Steven, PhD • 4Braid-Forbes Health Research, LLC, Carrier 5% SAF and Inpatient 100% SAF, 2019 analysis by Peter M. Steven, PhD • 5International Society for Clinical Densitometry, Survey May 2020 • 6Travis Singleton, Merritt Hawkins survey 2020 • 7G. Girvan, May 22, 2020 FREOPP.org • 8Burden of Illness for Osteoporotic Fractures Compared With Other Serious Diseases Among Postmenopausal Women in the United States, 2015 Jan;90(1):53-62. doi: 10.1016/j.ymayo.2014.09.011. Epub 2014 Dec 4.