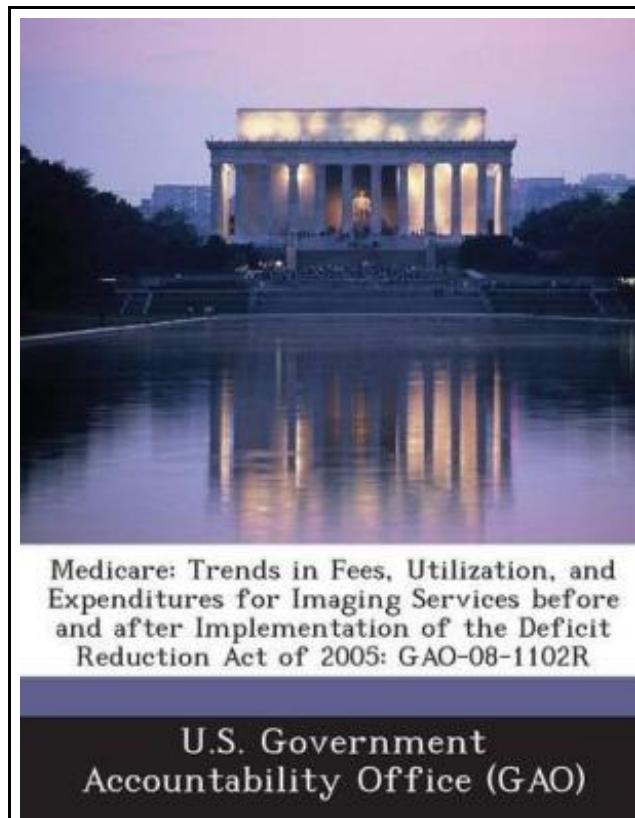


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(Dr. Kayley Kovacek PhD)

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BiblioGov. Paperback. Book Condition: New. This item is printed on demand. Paperback. 22 pages. Dimensions: 9.7in. x 7.4in. x 0.1in. Rapid spending growth for Medicare Part B--which covers physician and other outpatient services--has heightened concerns about the long-range fiscal sustainability of Medicare. Medicare Part B expenditures are expected to increase over the next decade at an average annual rate of about 8 percent, which is faster than the projected 4.8 percent annual growth rate in the national economy over this time period. As we noted in our June 2008 report, spending on physician imaging services has been one of the fastest-growing sets of services paid for under the Medicare Part B physician fee schedule (PFS), the payment system used to determine fees for Medicare physician-billed services. From 2000 through 2006, Medicare spending for physician imaging services doubled from about 7 billion to about 14 billion--an average annual increase of 13 percent, compared to an 8 percent increase in spending for all Medicare physician-billed services over the same time period. We also found that by 2006 about two-thirds of spending on physician imaging services occurred in physician office settings--an indicator of a shift toward providing imaging services in physicians offices as opposed to providing such services in hospital or other institutional settings. In our June 2008 report, we also noted that the growth in Medicare spending on imaging services has been more rapid among what are known as advanced imaging modalities--computed tomography (CT), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), and nuclear medicine--when compared with the growth in spending among other, less advanced imaging modalities such as x-ray or ultrasound. Congress has recently acted to address the rapid growth in spending on imaging services. Under a provision in the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (DRA), Medicare fees for certain imaging services covered by the...



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