Physical therapy is an effective, lower cost non-pharmacological alternative to invasive procedures such as surgery and injections.

- Physical therapy results in lower healthcare costs due to lower likelihood of receiving opioid prescription medications, epidural injections, follow-up advanced imaging, follow-up physician visits, and other health resource use metrics without compromising patient outcomes.

- In a 2011 report, The Institute for Clinical and Economic Review (ICER) determined that fusion, spinal injections, radiofrequency facet denervation, and Interdisciplinary Rehabilitation Programs (IRPs) are all low-value treatments compared to physical therapy because they command substantially higher cost without major clinical improvements.

- Physical therapy has been shown to be effective at relieving osteoarthritis patients’ knee pain and stiffness, often replacing the need for invasive surgery.

- Physical therapy as a first management is associated with lower healthcare utilization and costs than advanced imaging for patients with lower back pain.

Physical therapy helps reduce total spending on Medicare Parts A & B.

- Total Medicare A/B spending on average for beneficiaries who receive physical therapy as the first treatment option is 19% less than total average Medicare A/B spending for beneficiaries who receive injections first and 75% less than total average spending observed for patients who undergo surgery first.

- Patients with low back pain who utilized multiple physical therapy visits incurred between 14% and 32% lower average total Medicare A/B spending in the year following diagnosis than did beneficiaries with one therapy visit.