



## CMS Medicare FFS Provider e-News

CMS Information for the Medicare Fee-For-Service Provider Community

*CMS asks that you share the following important information with all of your association members and State and local chapters. Thank you!*

Robin Fritter, Director  
Division of Provider  
Relations & Outreach  
Provider Communications  
Group  
Center for Medicare  
Centers for Medicare &  
Medicaid Services

[robin.fritter@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:robin.fritter@cms.hhs.gov)  
410-786-7485

### The e-News for the week of Fri Feb 18 includes...

#### MEETINGS AND CALLS

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#### UPDATES FROM THE MEDICARE LEARNING NETWORK®

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- [“Medicare Appeals Process: Five Levels to Protect Providers, Physicians, and Other Suppliers” Revised](#)

### **Open-Door Forum: Designing a Home Health Value-Based Purchasing Program** [[↑](#)]

Thu Feb 24, 1:30-3pm EST

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will host a Special Open-Door Forum on designing a value-based purchasing program for home health agencies (HHAs). The purpose of this Special Open-Door Forum is to solicit input from all parties interested in the development of the plan for implementing a VBP program in HHAs. Section 3006 of the *Affordable Care Act* requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop a plan to implement a value-

based purchasing program for payments to home health agencies under the Medicare program. The Secretary must submit a report containing this plan to Congress not later than Sat Oct 1, 2011. Currently, we are in the process of identifying and analyzing key components of an effective VBP program for home health care.

After a brief presentation by CMS on the statutory requirements and the goals and objectives for the call, we will open the phones to comments. CMS is seeking stakeholder input on a number of topics defined in the statute, including:

- The ongoing development, selection, and modification process for measures of quality and efficiency;
- The reporting, collection, and validation of quality data;
- The structure of value-based payment adjustments, including the determination of thresholds or improvements in quality, the size of such payments, and the sources of funding for the value-based bonus payments;
- Methods for the public disclosure of information on the performance of home health agencies; and
- Any other issues.

The following list provides additional questions and findings from a literature review of existing VBP programs on which we are interested in receiving feedback.

- Quality Measures – Which types of measures do you think should be used to measure agency performance under a VBP program?
- Measuring Performance – What are the advantages and disadvantages of using individual measure scores or composite scores?
- Ranking Performance – Should performance incentives be based on attainment, improvement, improvement with an attainment floor, or a combination?
- Payment Mechanisms – What factors should be considered in deciding how to reward incentive payments (eg. payment frequency could be yearly, quarterly, or more frequent) and to collect penalties (eg. withholding a percentage of all payments and distributing accumulated funds to high performers would eliminate the need to collect payments from poor-performing agencies)? What do you think is an appropriate payment level to promote high-quality care, without introducing excessive uncertainty about revenue?
- Data Infrastructure – What do you think are the most pressing concerns in the current data collection system for home health care? What can be done to reduce the burden of data collection, and ensure timely and accurate data submission?
- Public Reporting – How can public reporting complement a VBP program?

Special Open-Door Forum Participation Instructions:

- Dial 800-837-1935
- Conference ID #37941789
- Note: For TTY Communications Relay Services, dial 7-1-1 or 800-855-2880 and a Relay Communications Assistant will help.
- An audio recording and transcript of this Special Forum will be posted to the Open-Door Forum website at [http://www.CMS.gov/OpenDoorForums/05\\_ODF\\_SpecialODF.asp](http://www.CMS.gov/OpenDoorForums/05_ODF_SpecialODF.asp) and will be accessible for download beginning on or around Thu Mar 24.
- You are also encouraged to submit additional thoughts or feedback following the session directly to [HHVBP@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:HHVBP@cms.hhs.gov).

**Agendas for the March 2011 ICD-9-CM Coordination & Maintenance Committee Meeting Now Available** [[↑](#)]  
Wed Mar 9 and Thu Mar 10

This will be the last meeting to address ICD-9-CM and ICD-10 code updates before the partial code freeze is implemented. The following agendas have been posted:

- Procedures topics, Wed Mar 9 – Agenda is posted in the “Downloads” section at [http://www.CMS.gov/ICD9ProviderDiagnosticCodes/03\\_meetings.asp](http://www.CMS.gov/ICD9ProviderDiagnosticCodes/03_meetings.asp). Handouts will also be available on this website a few days before the meeting.
- Diagnosis topics, Thu Mar 10 – The link to this agenda is under “Upcoming Meeting, March 9-10, 2011” at [http://www.CDC.gov/nchs/icd/icd9cm\\_maintenance.htm](http://www.CDC.gov/nchs/icd/icd9cm_maintenance.htm). Handouts will also be available at this website a few days before the meeting.

## EHR Incentive Programs: Stay Informed [[↑](#)]

**Have you registered for the CMS EHR Incentive Programs yet?** Registration for the Medicare and Medicaid EHR Incentive Programs has already begun, and providers and hospitals began receiving their Medicaid EHR incentive payments in January. The University of Kentucky Healthcare, the University of Kentucky's teaching hospital, and Central Baptist Hospital became the first hospitals to receive payments, and physicians at the Gastorf Family Clinic in Durant, OK, became the first eligible professionals to collect their initial Medicaid EHR Incentive Program payments.

Not sure if you are eligible to participate in the EHR Incentive Programs? Need help with registration? The Medicare and Medicaid EHR Incentive Programs website features several resources to assist you, including:

- [The Eligibility Widget](#) – In order to register, you must first find out if you qualify as an eligible professional or eligible hospital. The eligibility widget will walk you step-by-step through the eligibility requirements, letting you know if you qualify for the Medicare or Medicaid EHR Incentive Programs. You can find this resource on the CMS website at [http://www.CMS.gov/EHRIncentivePrograms/15\\_Eligibility.asp](http://www.CMS.gov/EHRIncentivePrograms/15_Eligibility.asp).
- [Information About Registration](#) – To help you prepare, a list of all the information you will need during your registration process is provided for both eligible professionals and eligible hospitals. You can find this resource on the CMS website at [http://www.CMS.gov/EHRIncentivePrograms/20\\_RegistrationandAttestation.asp#BOOKMARK2](http://www.CMS.gov/EHRIncentivePrograms/20_RegistrationandAttestation.asp#BOOKMARK2).
- [The Eligible Professional Registration Webinar](#) – Are you ready to register? Check out the registration webinar for eligible professionals, which provides video guidance to help you through the registration process. View at <http://www.YouTube.com/user/CMSHHSgov#p/u/0/sKngNjd8luc>.
- [Hospital Tip Sheets](#) – Located on the EHR Incentive Programs website are helpful tip sheets providing information on payment and eligibility guidelines for Medicare, Medicaid, and Critical Access Hospitals. You can find these resources at [http://www.CMS.gov/EHRIncentivePrograms/55\\_EducationalMaterials.asp](http://www.CMS.gov/EHRIncentivePrograms/55_EducationalMaterials.asp).
- [EHR Listserv](#) – CMS has created a new listserv specifically about the EHR Incentive Programs. The listserv will provide timely, authoritative information about the programs, including registration and attestation updates and details about the payment process. By subscribing to the listserv, you'll be kept informed of upcoming deadlines and answers to the questions and concerns that we have gathered from eligible professionals and hospitals in the field. New updates will be emailed through the listserv to keep you informed of any developments, and subscribers will be notified of any new FAQs that are published on the CMS EHR Incentive Programs' website. Sign up at and learn more [http://www.CMS.gov/EHRIncentivePrograms/65\\_CMS\\_EHR\\_Listserv.asp](http://www.CMS.gov/EHRIncentivePrograms/65_CMS_EHR_Listserv.asp).

Learn more about the EHR Incentive Programs and keep up to date at <http://www.CMS.gov/EHRIncentivePrograms>.

## EHR Incentive Programs: Not Sure Where to Start? [[↑](#)]

Everyone's talking about the Medicare & Medicare Electronic Health Record Incentive Programs. Not sure what it's all about? CMS has developed the following tip sheets to get you started. You can view them electronically or [order free printed copies](#).

#### *Payment and Eligibility For Professionals*

- [Eligibility Flow Chart](#)
- [Tip Sheet for Eligible Professionals](#)
- [Tip Sheet for Eligible Professionals](#)
- [Medicare EHR Incentive Program, Physician Quality Reporting System, and e-Prescribing Comparison](#)

#### *Payment and Eligibility For Hospitals*

- [Tip Sheet for Medicare Hospitals](#)
- [Tip Sheet for Critical Access Hospitals](#)
- [Tip Sheet for Medicaid Hospitals](#)

And for more information, visit the <http://www.CMS.gov/EHRIncentivePrograms> for the latest news and updates on the EHR Incentive Programs.

#### **CMS Staff to Conduct Follow-up Calls for CERT Program** [\[↑\]](#)

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services will be conducting follow-up calls to providers for the Comprehensive Error Rate Testing (CERT) program; our staff may contact you to obtain all necessary medical record documentation for claims reviewed under the CERT program. Although you may have already received letters and telephone calls from the CERT contractor, these additional efforts by CMS to obtain adequate documentation may change your claim's status from "improper payment" to "proper payment," which will allow us to calculate a more accurate Medicare FFS error rate while also reducing the number of improper payments.

#### **February Flu Shot Reminder** [\[↑\]](#)

It's Not too Late to Give and Get the Flu Vaccine. Take advantage of each office visit and continue to protect your patients against the seasonal flu. Medicare will continue to pay for the seasonal flu vaccine and its administration for all Medicare beneficiaries through the entire flu season. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that patients, healthcare workers, and caregivers be vaccinated against the seasonal flu. Protect your patients. Protect your family. Protect yourself. Get your flu vaccine – not the flu.

Remember: influenza vaccine plus its administration are covered Part-B benefits. Note that influenza vaccine is NOT a Part-D-covered drug. For information about Medicare's coverage of the influenza vaccine and its administration, as well as related educational resources for healthcare professionals and their staff, please visit <http://www.CMS.gov/AdultImmunizations> and [http://www.CMS.gov/MLNProducts/Downloads/Flu\\_Products.pdf](http://www.CMS.gov/MLNProducts/Downloads/Flu_Products.pdf).

#### **Skilled Nursing Facility Prospective Payment System FY2011 PC Pricer Update** [\[↑\]](#)

To correct a pricing factor error, the Skilled Nursing Facility Prospective Payment System (SNF PPS) FY2011 PC Pricer has been updated and posted on the CMS website. If you use this pricer, visit [http://www.CMS.gov/PCPricer/04\\_SNF.asp](http://www.CMS.gov/PCPricer/04_SNF.asp) to download the latest version, dated 2011-02-14.

## **Inpatient Prospective Payment System FY2011 PC Pricer Update** [[↑](#)]

A date edit error was discovered in the Inpatient Prospective Payment System (INP PPS) FY2011 PC Pricer, and an updated version has been posted on the CMS website. If you use this pricer (for claims dated 2010-10-01 to 2011-09-30), visit [http://www.CMS.gov/PCPricer/03\\_inpatient.asp](http://www.CMS.gov/PCPricer/03_inpatient.asp) to download the latest version, dated 2011-02-14.

## **From the MLN: Accurately File Medicare Claims the First Time** [[↑](#)]

Are you familiar with the products and resources of the MLN? The Medicare Learning Network<sup>®</sup> (MLN), within the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, is the nationally-recognized source for official Medicare information for Medicare Fee-For-Service Providers. The MLN develops and produces consistent, timely, accurate, and easy-to-understand materials that can help inpatient hospital providers submit Medicare claims correctly the *first* time. In order to get paid for the care and services provided to patients, it is important for FFS providers to understand how to file claims properly.

Educate yourself with [free access to more than three-dozen products developed by the MLN especially for Medicare Fee-For-Service \(FFS\) reimbursement specialists](#).

The [Suite of Products and Resources for Inpatient Hospitals](#) provides your billers, coders, and other reimbursement specialists with products and resources that cover topics of interest to them – from reimbursement methodologies for inpatient hospital services and the structure and organization of the Medicare Inpatient Acute Care Prospective Payment System to the relationship between coding and diagnosis-related group (DRG) assignment, plus additional targeted resources to help them understand Medicare payment policies and regulations. In addition, the Suite contains many free [Web-Based Training Courses](#) that offer the opportunity to earn Continuing Education Units at absolutely no cost.

## **From the MLN: “Medicare Appeals Process: Five Levels to Protect Providers, Physicians, and Other Suppliers” Revised** [[↑](#)]

The revised brochure titled “The Medicare Appeals Process: Five Levels to Protect Providers, Physicians, and Other Suppliers” (revised January 2011) is now available in downloadable format from the **Medicare Learning Network<sup>®</sup>** at <http://www.CMS.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/MedicareAppealsProcess.pdf>. This brochure is designed to provide an overview of the Medicare Part-A and Part-B administrative appeals process available to providers, physicians, and other suppliers who provide services and supplies to Medicare beneficiaries, as well as details on where to obtain more information about this appeals process.

### **More Helpful Links...**

Check out CMS on



[Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#), and [Flickr](#)!

**The Medicare Learning Network**

[www.CMS.gov/MLNGenInfo](http://www.CMS.gov/MLNGenInfo)

**Archive of Provider e-News Messages**

[www.CMS.gov/FFSProvPartProg/EmailArchive](http://www.CMS.gov/FFSProvPartProg/EmailArchive)