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Official CMS news from the Medicare Learning Network®

Thursday, November 19, 2020

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News

CMS Releases Nursing Home COVID-19 Training Data with Urgent Call to Action

Agency thanks nursing homes whose staff have completed free CMS training, but urges remaining homes to take advantage of this resource.

On November 17, CMS publicly recognized the 1,092 nursing homes at which 50% or more of their staff have completed CMS training designed to help staff combat the spread of COVID-19 in nursing homes. CMS applauds these facilities for taking this critical step to equip their staff with the latest information regarding infection control, vaccine distribution, and other topics.

Full press release.

Medicare FFS Estimated Improper Payments Decline by $15 Billion Since 2016

Continued reduction marks fourth year Medicare FFS improper payment rate has been below 10%.

On November 16, CMS announced that the Medicare Fee-for-Service (FFS) improper payment rate has continued to decline, reinforcing the Trump Administration and CMS' commitment to strengthening Medicare and protecting taxpayer dollars. This translates to less fraud, waste, and abuse that can increase the fiscal burden on the nation's health care system.

Full press release.

CMS Retiring Original Compare Tools on December 1

Use Medicare.gov's Care Compare to find and compare health care providers.

In early September, CMS released Care Compare on Medicare.gov, which streamlines our 8 original health care compare tools. These original compare tools will retire on December 1, ending this transition period.

Care Compare's new design makes it easier to find the same information that's on the original compare tools. It gives you, patients, and caregivers one user-friendly place to find cost, quality of care, service volume, and other CMS quality data to help make informed health care decisions. Now, instead of having to search through many compare tools, with just one click on Care Compare, you'll find easy-to-understand information about nursing homes, hospitals, doctors, and other health care providers.

This transition doesn't change how we measure quality. We'll continue to improve Care Compare and the Provider Data Catalog based on stakeholder and consumer feedback.

COVID-19: Health Care Operations Lessons and Fostering Professional Resilience

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) Technical Resources, Assistance Center, and Information Exchange (TRACIE) released an Express message with new resources:
- Healthcare Operations During the COVID-19 Pandemic Speaker Series: Health care professionals share their experiences
- COVID-19 Healthcare Professional Stress and Resilience Speaker Series: Identify acute and chronic stressors and foster resilience
- Hidden Consequences: How the COVID Pandemic is Impacting Children Webinar Series: Recordings from the complete 4 webinar series

For More Information:
- ASPR TRACIE fact sheet
- ASPR TRACIE website
- ASPR TRACIE Novel Coronavirus Resources webpage

Medicare Diabetes Prevention Program: Become a Medicare-Enrolled Supplier

Medicare pays Medicare Diabetes Prevention Program (MDPP) suppliers to provide eligible patients with group-based intervention for up to 2 years, using the CDC-approved National Diabetes Prevention Program curriculum.

Interested in becoming a Medicare-enrolled MDPP supplier?
Follow the 2-step process:
1. Get CDC preliminary or full recognition.
2. Then, find out how to apply to become a Medicare MDPP supplier. Use our checklist to gather what you need to enroll.

Completed CDC recognition and ready for Medicare enrollment?
Fill out the online Medicare Enrollment Application. For help applying, see our Enrollment Webinar Recording and Enrollment Tutorial Video. If you're already enrolled in Medicare, you must re-enroll as an MDPP supplier.

For More Information:
- Public Health Emergency Flexibilities
- MDPP Expanded Model booklet
- Materials from Medicare Learning Network call
- MDPP webpage
- CDC - CMS Roles fact sheet
- Contact the MDPP Supplier Support Center

Recognizing Lung Cancer Awareness Month and the Great American Smokeout

November is Lung Cancer Awareness Month, and November 19 is the Great American Smokeout. Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable illness and death in the United States. Many smokers want to quit but have difficulty succeeding.
- Talk to your patients about quitting
- Recommend Medicare-covered preventative services, including counseling to prevent tobacco use, lung cancer screening counseling, and annual screening for lung cancer with low dose computed tomography

For More Information:
- Medicare Preventive Services educational tool
- CDC Lung Cancer Awareness website
- Great American Smokeout webpage

Visit the Preventive Services website to learn more about Medicare-covered services.

Compliance

Hospice Care: Safeguards for Medicare Patients

In 2 reports, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) focused on hospice:
- Quality of care and common deficiencies
- Instances of beneficiary harm and vulnerabilities

Review the Safeguards for Medicare Patients in Hospice Care fact sheet to help you recognize and address deficiencies in care and protect your patients from harm. Additional resources:
- Hospice Deficiencies Pose Risks to Medicare Beneficiaries OIG Report
- Safeguards Must Be Strengthened To Protect Medicare Hospice Patients From Harm OIG Report
- Medicare Claims Processing Manual, Chapter 11, Section 30.1
- Eldercare Locator website
- Contact Information For Filing a Complaint with the State Survey Agency

Events

CMS-CDC Fundamentals of COVID-19 Prevention for Nursing Home Management Call — November 19
Thursday, November 19 from 4 to 5 pm ET

CMS, CDC, and the Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) Program present this live Q&A series:
- Register for Q&A sessions
- Submit questions in advance to DVACSupport@thebizzellgroup.com
- Visit the QIO Program FAQ webpage

Target Audience: Clinical and administrative nursing home staff members.

Hospital Price Transparency Webcast — December 8
Tuesday, December 8 from 2 to 3 pm ET

Register for this Medicare Learning Network event.

Is your institution prepared to comply with the requirements of the Hospital Price Transparency Final Rule? Effective January 1, each hospital operating in the United States is required to provide clear, accessible pricing information online about the items and services they provide in 2 ways:

- Comprehensive machine-readable file with all items and services
- Display of shoppable services in a consumer-friendly format

During this webcast, learn about resources to help you prepare for compliance and join in a Q&A session that follows the presentation.

You can call in if you can't stream audio through your computer.

Target Audience: All hospitals operating in the United States and other stakeholders.

Multimedia

Part A Cost Report Webcast: Audio Recording and Transcript

An audio recording and transcript are available for the October 29 Medicare Learning Network webcast on Medicare Part A Cost Report: New Bulk e-Filing Feature. Learn how to e-file multiple cost reports in the Medicare Cost Report e-Filing (MCReF) system at the same time.

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