

Reducing the hospitalization rate for Medicare beneficiaries receiving home health care

ISSUE: Medicare has made some efforts to improve quality in home health care, but the rate of beneficiaries admitted to an acute care hospital during a home health stay has not declined. Linking the home health agency's Medicare payment to its hospitalization rate could encourage more agencies to improve on this measure.

KEY POINTS: Staff will review regional and agency trends in hospitalization rates. We will also discuss some key principles of a possible hospitalization measure in home health care.

ACTION: Commissioners should be prepared to discuss the utility of establishing a hospitalization measure for home health care and the principles suggested in this chapter.

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