

Assessing payment adequacy and updating payments: Physician and other health professional services

ISSUE: By law, each year the Commission is required to review Medicare payment policies and make recommendations to the Congress. The Commission asks whether payments to physicians and other health professionals are adequate and how they should be updated in 2021.

KEY POINTS: We examine several factors to determine the adequacy of Medicare's fee schedule payments for physicians and other health professionals: beneficiaries' access to care (including growth in the number of clinician encounters per beneficiary), the quality of their care, and Medicare payments and providers' costs (including growth in allowed charges, and physician compensation).

ACTION: Commissioners will review the findings and discuss the update to Medicare's payments for physician and other health professional services.