

Collecting data to improve the accuracy of payments under the physician fee schedule

ISSUE: In the October 2011 letter on moving forward from the sustainable growth rate (SGR), the Commission recommended that the Congress direct the Secretary to regularly collect data for the physician fee schedule—including service volume and work time—to establish more accurate relative value units for the work of physicians and other health professionals and for practice expense. Currently, CMS does not have a regular method of data collection.

KEY POINTS: This session will lay out two options. Option 1 is to collect the data service by service, a bottom-up approach. Option 2 is more top down, with the physician or other health professional as the unit of analysis. Each has feasibility issues.

ACTION: Commissioners will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of alternative approaches to collecting data to improve the accuracy of payments under the fee schedule.

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