

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 to 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 2016.

KEY POINTS: We examine several factors to determine the adequacy of Medicare's fee-schedule payments for physicians and other health professionals, including: beneficiary access; volume growth; private insurer rates compared to Medicare rates; and variation in compensation. We also discuss a per beneficiary payment for primary care.

ACTION: Commissioners should review the findings in preparation for discussion at the December meeting.

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