

Medicare Advantage payment and access for enrollees with end-stage renal disease

ISSUE: The 21st Century Cures Act lifted existing limitations on Medicare beneficiaries with end-stage renal (ESRD) enrolling in Medicare Advantage (MA), allowing ESRD beneficiaries to enroll directly in an MA plan starting in 2021. ESRD beneficiaries have significantly higher Medicare spending than other beneficiaries, and some observers expect that MA plans' coverage of cost sharing and mandatory cap on out-of-pocket expenses will attract additional ESRD beneficiaries in the coming years.

KEY POINTS: Staff present new analyses assessing Medicare payment adequacy for ESRD enrollees in MA plans and consider whether Medicare beneficiaries with ESRD have access to MA plans that is equal to other Medicare beneficiaries.

ACTION: The Commission will discuss payment and access issues for ESRD beneficiaries in MA and provide guidance on future work in this area.