

Physician affiliation and practice size

ISSUE: Over the past decade, the share of physician practices that have been purchased by hospitals or health systems has increased. Physician practice size has also increased over time. Both trends have implications for Medicare payment policy.

KEY POINTS: We review a private-sector database of physician information and practice characteristics, and merge it with Medicare claims to provide an initial analysis of characteristics of Medicare-billing physicians. Our initial analysis finds similar trends to other data sources: increasing physician group practice size and a rising share of physicians reporting hospital and health system affiliation.

ACTION: Commissioners should review the findings and be prepared to discuss the analysis.

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