

Assessing payment adequacy: 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 2014.

KEY POINTS: We examine several factors to determine payment adequacy for Medicare's fee-schedule payments for physicians and other health professionals. These include beneficiary access to physician services, ambulatory care quality, private insurer rates compared to Medicare rates, and volume growth. In our analysis, we also examine how the Medicare Economic Index is likely to change in 2014.

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

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Assessing payment adequacy: ambulatory surgical centers

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 ambulatory surgical centers (ASCs) are adequate and how they should be updated in 2014.

KEY POINTS: We evaluate several factors to determine the adequacy of Medicare payments for ASC services: beneficiaries' access to services, ASCs' access to capital, and change in revenue from the Medicare program.

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

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