

MEDICARE IMPROVEMENTS FOR



PATIENTS & PROVIDERS ACT

- Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008 - Amends Title XVIII (Medicare) of the Social Security Act (SSA) to provide for coverage of additional preventive services.
- Provides for gradual elimination of discriminatory copayment rates for Medicare psychiatric services.
- Places prohibitions and limitations on certain sales and marketing activities under Medicare Advantage (MA) plans and Medicare Prescription Drug Plans (PDPs).
- Requires offering of a range of Medicare supplemental policies.
- Extends the Qualifying Individual program.
- Provides for application of a full low-income subsidy assets test under the Medicare Savings Program.
- Eliminates Medicare Part D (Prescription Drug Benefit) late enrollment penalties for individuals with LIS.
- Directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to make grants to states for state health insurance assistance programs (SHIPs), area agencies on aging, and aging and disability resource centers.
- Authorizes the Secretary to award grants to states for increasing the delivery of mental health services or other health care services to meet the needs of veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom living in rural areas.
- Permits rebasing for sole community hospitals.
- Directs the Secretary to establish a demonstration project for development and testing of new community health integration models in certain rural counties.
- Amends the Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006, as amended by the Medicare, Medicaid, and SCHIP Extension Act of 2007, to extend through FY2009 the reclassification of certain hospitals.
- Increases physicians' payments. Revises requirements for and extends the quality reporting system, including incentive payments.
- Directs the Secretary to establish a Physician Feedback Program.
- Provides for: (1) incentives for electronic prescribing of medicine; (2) expanded access to primary care services; (3) extension of the floor on Medicare work geographic adjustment under the Medicare physician fee schedule; and (4) an accreditation requirement for advanced diagnostic imaging services.

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- Revises requirements for Medicare anesthesia teaching programs.
- Makes permanent the exception to the 60-day limit on Medicare reciprocal billing arrangements between two physicians over a longer continuous period during all of which one of them is ordered to active duty as a member of a reserve component of the armed forces.
- Provides for coverage of pulmonary and cardiac rehabilitation.
- Extends increased Medicare payments for ground ambulance services.
- Amends the Public Health Services Act to direct the Secretary to establish pilot projects with respect to chronic kidney disease.
- Revises requirements for renal dialysis.
- Amends Title XVIII (Medicare) of the Social Security Act to delay generally until after 2011 full implementation of the Medicare competitive acquisition program for the purchase of durable medical equipment (DME), prosthetics, orthotics, and supplies (DMEPOS).
- Revises such program, dividing its implementation into two rounds, and specifying covered item updates for 2009-2014.
- Directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to provide for a competitive acquisition ombudsman within the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to respond to complaints and inquiries by suppliers and individuals.
- Provides for phase-out of indirect costs of medical education from capitation rates.
- Revises requirements for MA private fee-for-service plans as well as MA plans for special needs individuals.
- Modifies requirements for quality improvement programs.
- Requires prompt payment of clean claims by prescription drug plans and MA-Prescription Drug plans under Medicare Part D.
- Revises the definition of medically accepted indication for drugs.
- Directs the Secretary to: (1) contract with a consensus-based entity for certain activities relating to health care performance measurement; and (2) evaluate and report to Congress on approaches for the collection of data regarding health care disparities.
- Creates the Medicare Improvement Fund.
- Extends the transitional medical assistance (TMA), the abstinence education program, and allotments for disproportionate share hospitals (DSHs) under SSA Title XIX (Medicaid).
- Amends the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 to extend supplemental grants under SSA Title IV Part D (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) (TANF).
- Amends the Public Health Service Act to extend special diabetes grant programs.