

**EDITION:** May 2, 2019



## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & PUBLIC POLICY

*Your weekly dose of health care policy*

### CONGRESSIONAL

#### House Health Spending Bill Passes Subcommittee

On Tuesday, House Appropriations Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee approved its [FY 2020 funding bill](#) along party lines. The health portion of the appropriations bill includes increases for many government agencies, with an approximate \$8.5 billion increase from its current funding. Specific funding is allocated towards addiction treatment and prevention, mental health, and a study on gun violence. The bill will now make its way to the full Committee, but it is unlikely to be accepted by Senate Republicans as they craft their own appropriations legislation.

### ADMINISTRATION

#### Interoperability Rules Comment Time Extended

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has extended the comment deadlines for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services ([CMS](#)) and the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology ([ONC](#)) Interoperability proposed rules through June 3, 2019. Along with their announcement, they noted that based on public comments, effective dates for any finalized policies will allow for adequate implementation timelines.

#### CMS Released IRF Proposed Rule

### MACRA HIGHLIGHTS

Need a helpful resources to track important dates and information for the Quality Payment Program? Check out the QPP Participation [Infographic](#).

### HEALTH CARE ACTIVITIES ON THE HILL

#### Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee

**5/7 at 10:00am:** Full Committee [hearing](#) on Implementing the 21st Century Cures Act: Making Electronic Health Information Available to Patients and Providers, Part II.

#### Senate Judiciary Committee

**5/7 at 10:00am:** Full Committee [hearing](#) on Intellectual Property and the Price of Prescription Drugs: Balancing Innovation and Competition.

On April 17, CMS released the FY 2020 Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility (IRF) Prospective Payment System [proposed rule](#). The [proposed rule](#) would update the IRF PPS rates with a 2.3 percent increase, rebase the IRF PPS market basket, modify the wage index, add two measures to the IRF quality reporting program and require IRFs to report on a set of standardized patient assessment data elements beginning in FY 2022. Comments are due June 17.

### **Notice of Benefit and Payment Parameters Final Rule Released**

On April 18, HHS released its Notice of Benefit and Payment Parameters for 2020 [Final Rule](#). The [Payment Notice](#) updates risk adjustment and risk adjustment data validation program policies, cost-sharing parameters and cost-sharing reductions; and user fees among other updates. The rule is effective on June 24, 2019.

### **IPF Proposed Rule Released**

On April 18, CMS released the FY 2020 Inpatient Psychiatric Facilities (IPF) Prospective Payment System [proposed rule](#). The [proposed rule](#) updates payments for IPFs by 1.7 percent and provides updates to the quality reporting programs. Comments are due June 17

### **Hospice Proposed Rule Released**

On April 19, CMS released the FY 2020 Hospice Wage Index and Payment Rate Update and Hospice Quality Reporting Requirements [proposed rule](#). The [proposed rule](#) would update hospice payment by 2.7 percent, modify coverage transparency requirements, and solicits comments on the interaction of the hospice benefit with various alternative care delivery models, including Medicare Advantage and accountable care organizations. Comments are due June 18.

### **SNF Proposed Rule Released**

On April 18, CMS released the Prospective Payment System and Consolidated Billing for Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs) [proposed rule](#). This [proposed rule](#) provides a 2.5 percent update to the payment rate, quality reporting requirements, and the SNF Value-Based Purchasing Program (VBP), among other issues. Comments are due June 18.

### **IPPS and LTCH PPS Proposed Rules Released**

On April 23, CMS released the FY 2020 Hospital Inpatient

### **Senate Finance Committee**

**5/8 at 10:15am:** Full Committee [hearing](#) on the Medicare Physician Payment Reform After Two Years: Examining MACRA Implementation and the Road Ahead.

### **WEEKLY TRIVIA**

Which U.S. President watched the most movies in the White House Movie Theatre?

Click [here](#) to find the answer.

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Prospective Payment Systems (IPPS) for Acute Care Hospitals and the Long Term Care Hospital (LTCH) Prospective Payment System [proposed rule](#). The [proposed rule](#) updates payment for hospitals by 3.7 percent and LTCHs by .9 percent, begins to align rural and urban hospital payment, and increases payment for CAR-T cancer treatment, among other things. Comments are due June 24.

### **CMMI Announces New Primary Care Models**

On Monday, April 22, the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) announced five new primary care payment models under two paths: [Primary Care First](#), using the underlying principles of the CPC+ model and [Direct Contracting](#). These voluntary models will begin in January 2020 and will run for five years. The models will include:

1. Primary Care First (PCF)
2. Primary Care First – High Need Populations
3. Direct Contracting – Global
4. Direct Contracting – Professional
5. Direct Contracting – Geographic

CMS will be hosting webinars and providing further information on the model pages in the coming weeks.

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