

## **In the News:**

### **CMS Proposes Care Coordination Payments for Recently Discharged Patients**

For the first time, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is proposing to pay community physicians for the care required to help a patient transition back to the community following discharge from a hospital. Under the proposed rule, CMS would make a separate payment to a patient's community physician to coordinate care during the first 30 days after a patient's hospital stay.

In comment letters to CMS, HFMA has encouraged CMS to make payments for care coordination for patients who have been recently discharged from hospitals. Research shows that patients who receive timely physician follow-up care after being discharged are significantly less likely to be readmitted.

The proposed rule would increase payments for family physicians by 7 percent and other practitioners providing primary care services by 3 to 5 percent under the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule for 2013.

"Helping primary care doctors will help improve patient care and lower healthcare costs long term," CMS Acting Administrator Marilyn Tavenner said in a news release.

The proposed rule, which will appear in the July 30 Federal Register, also seeks public comment on how Medicare can better recognize the services community physicians provide in office visits and in coordinating care outside of the office.

To read the entire press release, click [here](#) (link to link below)

<http://www.cms.gov/apps/media/press/release.asp?Counter=4398&intNumPerPage=10&checkDate=&checkKey=&srchType=1&numDays=3500&srchOpt=0&srchData=&keywordType=All&chkNewsType=1%2C+2%2C+3%2C+4%2C+5&intPage=&showAll=&pYear=&year=&desc=&cboOrder=date>

### **Survey: Hospitals Virtually Give Up Search for Solo Physicians**

Hospitals have virtually given up on searches for solo physicians, according to a new nationwide survey by Merritt Hawkins, a physician search and consulting firm.

The survey tracked more than 2,700 physician recruiting assignments during a 12-month period ending in late March. Out of the recruiting assignments, only 28, or just 1 percent, were for solo physicians, according to the findings. In 2004, by comparison, 22 percent of the firm's recruiting assignments were for solo practitioners

The survey also found that 63 percent of search assignments featured hospital employment of physicians, up from 56 percent in 2011 and 11 percent in 2004. If the trend continues, over 75 percent of newly hired physicians will be hospital employees within two years, Merritt Hawkins projects.

To see the survey results, click here

<http://www.merrihawkins.com/uploadedFiles/MerrittHawkins/Pdf/mha2012survpreview.pdf>

### **CDC Survey: Most Office-Based Physicians Satisfied With EHRs**

Approximately 55 percent of physicians responding to a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention survey say they have adopted an electronic health record (EHR) system and an overwhelming majority of physicians are satisfied with their systems.

The survey found that 85 percent of physicians who are using an EHR system say they are either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied. More than 70 percent of physicians say they were happy enough with their selection that they would purchase the same EHR system again. Only 5 percent of physicians say they were dissatisfied with the systems, while 10 percent say they were somewhat dissatisfied.

Among the physicians who adopted an EHR system, 74 percent say using the system resulted in enhanced patient care, according to the survey. About half of the physicians currently without an EHR system say they either plan to purchase a system within the next year or use a system already purchased.

The EHR adoption rate for solo practitioners was 29 percent, compared with 60 percent for two-physician practices, 62 percent for three to 10 physicians in a group, and 86 percent for groups of 11 physicians or more. More than 3,000 physicians were surveyed by CDC's National Center for Health Statistics.