



E-Alliance Extra

Missouri Alliance for Home Care

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Medicaid 1% Rate Increase for In-Home and CDS Slated to Take Effect January 1, 2016

If all goes according to schedule, providers should be receiving a notice from MO HealthNet and DSDS this week related to the 1% rate increase for the In-Home and CDS services. As of Thursday last week, the exact amount of the 1% had not been determined, however it should be in the neighborhood of \$.17 per hour.

MedPAC Issues Preliminary Recommendations on Home Health Payment

Excerpts from NAHC Report

The Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) held a public meeting on December 11 to discuss tentative recommendations on Medicare home health payment policy for 2017. MedPAC is an advisory body to Congress that annually evaluates payment policy in all provider sectors in Medicare. The December meeting is a prelude to its March Report to Congress that outlines its recommendations and supporting analysis.

The preliminary recommendations regarding home health services essentially mirror those made in recent years. These tentative recommendations include:

- A zero percent inflation update in 2017
- Elimination of therapy utilization as a payment level determinant in the home health prospective payment system
- The institution of a second round of rate rebasing in 2018

President Obama Signed Into Law Legislation Expanding the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly

From NAHC Report

On November 5, 2015, President Barack Obama signed into law legislation (S. 1362/H.R. 3243) expanding eligibility for the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly. PACE is a joint Medicare and Medicaid program coordinating community-based care for seniors with

chronic conditions. Prior to this legislation being signed into law, an individual had to be at least 55 years of age and eligible for nursing home care in order to be eligible for the PACE program. The new law lowers the age restriction, allowing those 21 years of age and older who are nursing home eligible to participate.

The National Association of Home Care & Hospice (NAHC) supports the expansion of PACE, as a program that prioritizes home and community-based services, to include other populations such as younger individuals with disabilities.

The Senate version of the legislation was introduced by Senator Tom Carper (D-DE) and Senator Pat Toomey (R-PA), and the House version was introduced by Congressman Chris Smith (R-NJ) along with 19 other bipartisan cosponsors. Senator Carper has said the legislation will broaden the reach of PACE, reduce costs, and provide PACE programs “with the room they need to grow and innovate.” Congress passed the legislation earlier this year. Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle have praised the bill for allowing more people to receive care in their homes. Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) said, “PACE is centered on the belief that it is better for individuals and their families to receive both medical care and long-term social services and supports in the home and community whenever possible.”

Congressman Kevin Brady (R-TX), who recently became Chairman of the House Ways & Means Committee, praised the bill when it was introduced earlier this year. “The PACE program provides critical care and services to fragile seniors and other vulnerable beneficiaries from the comfort of their homes and normal surroundings while keeping them out of expensive nursing homes,” Chairman Brady said. “That’s why I support Congressman Smith’s efforts to make the program more innovative and adept to serve our nation’s elderly in line with the principles we believe should be embodied throughout Medicare.”

According to a recent interview with [Home Health Care News](#), Eileen Sullivan-Marx, dean of the New York University College of Nursing, said that the legislation “opened up opportunities” to expand the use of PACE programs for new populations. She told Home Health Care News that there are opportunities for home care agencies to open and run PACE programs, contract, and partner with hospitals.

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