

CMS NEWS

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CMS Announces Primary Care Practices to Participate in Historic Public-Private Partnership to Strengthen Primary Care

Seven regions will test unique investment in coordinated care

In support of more effective, more affordable, higher quality health care, 500 primary care practices in seven regions have been selected to participate in a new partnership between payers from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), state Medicaid agencies, commercial health plans, self-insured businesses, and primary care providers. This partnership is designed to provide improved access to quality health care at lower costs.

Under the Comprehensive Primary Care Initiative, CMS will pay primary care practices a care management fee, initially set at an average of \$20 per beneficiary per month, to support enhanced, coordinated services on behalf of Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries. Simultaneously, participating commercial, state, and other federal insurance plans are also offering enhanced payment to primary care practices that are designed to support them in providing high-quality primary care on behalf of their members.

For patients, this means these physicians may offer longer and more flexible hours, use electronic health records; coordinate care with patients' other health care providers; better engage patients and caregivers in managing their own care, and provide individualized, enhanced care for patients living with multiple chronic diseases and higher needs.

The initiative started in the fall of 2011 with CMS soliciting a diverse pool of commercial health plans, state Medicaid agencies, and self-insured businesses to work alongside Medicare to support comprehensive primary care. Public and private health plans in Arkansas, Colorado, New Jersey, Oregon, New York's Capital District-Hudson Valley region, Ohio and Kentucky's Cincinnati-Dayton region, and the Greater Tulsa region of Oklahoma signed letters of intent with CMS to participate in this initiative. The markets were selected in April, 2012 based on the percentage of the total population covered by payers who expressed interest in joining this partnership.

Eligible primary care practices in each market were invited to apply to participate and start delivering enhanced health care services in the fall of 2012. Through a competitive application process, primary care practices within the selected markets were chosen to participate in the Comprehensive Primary Care initiative. Practices were chosen based on their use of health information technology, ability to demonstrate recognition of advanced primary care delivery by leading clinical societies, service to patients covered by participating payers, participation in practice transformation and improvement activities, and diversity of geography, practice size, and ownership structure. CMS estimates that over 300,000 Medicare beneficiaries will be served by over 2,000 providers through this initiative.

"Primary care practices play a vital role in our health care system and we are looking at ways to better support them in their efforts to coordinate care for their patients" said Acting CMS Administrator Marilyn Tavenner.

The Comprehensive Primary Care initiative is a four-year initiative administered by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMS Innovation Center). The CMS Innovation Center was *created by the Affordable Care Act to test innovative payment and service delivery models that have the potential to reduce program expenditures while preserving or enhancing the quality of care.*

For more information, please go to: <http://www.innovation.cms.gov/initiatives/Comprehensive-Primary-Care-Initiative>

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