

U.S. House and Senate Notification
Thursday, June 16, 2011

To: Congressional Health Staff

From: Amy Hall
Director, Office of Legislation
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Re: Medicare Proposes New Standards for Community Mental Health Centers

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) today issued a proposed rule aimed at improving the quality and safety of treatment provided to approximately 25,000 Medicare beneficiaries who receive care at Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs) each year.

The notice of proposed rulemaking would establish Conditions of Participation (CoPs) for CMHCs for the first time. The proposed CoPs include health and safety standards that CMHCs would have to meet both to enroll as a Medicare provider and to continue to participate in the program. In addition, the proposed rule considers approaches to implementing a provision of the Affordable Care Act, which requires Medicare-participating CMHCs to provide at least 40 percent of their services to non-Medicare beneficiaries.

Under Medicare, CMHCs provide partial hospitalization services -- a program of intensive outpatient psychiatric services for patients with acute mental illness as an alternative to inpatient care.

The proposed rule went on display today at the Federal Register and will be published on June 17. CMS will accept public comments on the proposed rule until August 16, and will respond to comments in a final rule to be published in the coming months.

A press release on the proposed rule is attached FYI. If you have any questions, please contact the CMS Office of Legislation at 202-690-8220. Thank you.