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Medicare

Medicare Proposes Pay Raise for Renal Care in 2019

Medicare's payments for renal-care pay could increase by 1.7 percent in calendar year 2019, under a new proposal.

The proposed rule (RIN:0938-AT28) by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services also would change the agency's competitive bidding program for durable medical equipment to "drive competition and increase affordability."

The CMS projects that Medicare will spend \$10.6 billion in calendar year 2019 for chronic maintenance dialysis services to 7,000 end-stage renal disease facilities.

"Today's proposals will help secure sustainable access to durable medical equipment and reward dialysis facilities that adopt innovative new therapies," CMS

Administrator Seema Verma said in a statement July 11.

CMS also said its taking steps to promote innovation in Medicare's end-stage renal disease pay system by expanding a transitional drug add-on payment "to encourage the use of new drug therapies by promoting innovation in the program in order to encourage the development and use of new treatments and therapies."

The CMS said that, as the largest payer for kidney care, it recognizes that Medicare has a large part to play in encouraging innovation "in an area where innovation has been lagging."

Comments are due Sept. 10. A final rule must be issued by Nov. 1.

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