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Hospitals to Get \$4.8B More From Medicare in 2019

Medicare's payments for acute care hospitals will increase by 1.85 percent in fiscal year 2019.

The pay raise is for those hospitals meeting certain quality and electronic health record requirements. Overall, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services expects the rule to result in a \$4.8 billion increase in 2019 spending.

The final rule (RIN:0938-AT27), released by the agency Aug. 2, also made changes to the electronic health records incentive program, including basing its scoring methodology on a small set of performance measures.

The rule also finalizes two e-prescribing measures that the CMS expects will help combat the opioid epidemic. Both measures will not be required until calendar year 2020 to allow to refinement of standards.

The final rule will apply to more than 3,330 acute care hospitals and 420 long-term acute care hospitals. It will take effect Oct. 1.

Tenet Healthcare, HCA Healthcare, and Quorum Health would stand to benefit the most among publicly traded hospital systems, Jason McGorman, a senior equity analyst for health care with Bloomberg Intelligence, told Bloomberg Law in April.

Post Your Charges Online The final rule requires hospitals to make a list of their standard charges publicly available online and to update it at least once a year.

The rule also makes final certain technology add-on payments for 10 applications in 2019, including payment for Chimeric Antigen Receptor (CAR) T-cell therapy.

BY SHIRA STEIN

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