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Hurricanes Katrina and Rita – Frequently Asked Questions – Medicare Issues

Provider Types Affected

All providers affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita or serving Medicare patients affected by those hurricanes

Key Points

This article contains important information about Medicare issues resulting from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has posted pertinent information at http://www.cms.hhs.gov/Emergency/01_overview.asp#TopOfPage on its website.

Note: Please check the above web site frequently—it is updated on a daily basis.

Providers may want to review some of the following:

Hurricane Katrina Electronic Mailing List

This is an electronic mailing list service for those interested in receiving news automatically via e-mail from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)
(<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/AboutWebsite/EmailUpdates/list.asp>).

Hurricane Katrina: What Government Is Doing

This Department of Homeland Security web site is focused on the Government's response to Hurricane Katrina - including links to: How to Get Help; Donations and Volunteering; Finding Friends and Information; Health and Safety; and a link to Hurricane Katrina related information in Spanish
(<http://www.dhs.gov/Katrina>).

Fact Sheet: CMS Actions to Help Beneficiaries, Providers in Katrina-Stricken Areas

This link leads to specific Medicare-related hurricane relief information for healthcare providers who furnish medical services related to Hurricane Katrina (http://www.cms.hhs.gov/apps/media/fact_sheets.asp).

Phone Numbers for State Medical Assistance Offices

This web page contains contact information for all states; Related Websites; and Resources (a download of the Helpful Contacts tool). (Go to <http://www.medicare.gov/Contacts> and search on State Medical Assistance Offices.)

State Health Officials Letter and 1115 Model Waiver Template

This links to State Medicaid directors information including: A Letter to State Medicaid directors and State Children's Health Insurance Program Directors; an Application Template – Medicaid and SCHIP Coverage for Evacuees of Hurricane Katrina; information on Evacuee Eligibility Simplification Based on Home State Eligibility Rules; and Medicaid Eligibility Groups – Income and Resource Limits (<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/smdl/downloads/sho091605.pdf>).

Hurricane Information from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

Topics on this page include: What HHS is Doing; Health and Safety; How to Get Help; Donate and Volunteer; Finding Friends and Information; What Other Federal Agencies are Doing; and Key State Government Agencies in the Region (<http://www.hhs.gov/disasters/emergency/naturaldisasters/hurricanes/katrina/index.html>).

Hurricane Katrina Medicare Contractor and CMS Regional Office Contacts

This web page informs Medicare providers about relevant contact points for those in the affected areas; and notifies providers about a list of Questions & Answers available online under the "Hurricane Information" link on this site (<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/apps/contacts/>).

Signed Wavier Under Section 1135 of the Social Security Act 9/4/2005

Section 1135 of the Social Security Act allows the Secretary of Health and Human Services to waive or modify certain Medicare, Medicaid, or State Children's Health Insurance Program requirements in order to protect the public health and welfare in times of national crisis. On Wednesday August 31, 2005 Secretary Michael Leavitt notified the Congress that he was invoking this authority, as a consequence of Hurricane Katrina, in order to protect the health and welfare of the public in areas impacted by this crisis. CMS is taking action consistent with this authority to ensure that the people in these areas receive all necessary health care services (http://www.cms.hhs.gov/Emergency/02_Hurricanes.asp#TopOfPage).

Hurricane Katrina Recovery Information from FirstGov.gov

Links on this page include: Find Family and Friends; How to Get Help; Shelter and Housing for Survivors; Donate and Volunteer; Health and Safety; What Government is Doing; and Frequently Asked Questions (http://www.usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/PublicSafety/Hurricane_Katrina_Recovery.shtml).