



CMS Snapshot

November 21-27, 2019

Delivered to you by the Partner Relations Group in the Office of Communications

All releases below are from 2pm Thursday, November 21 through 12pm Wednesday, November 27

News Releases

*November 21- [Secretary Azar Hosts Bipartisan Rural Health Roundtable with Members of Congress](#). Today, on the occasion of National Rural Health Day, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar hosted a bipartisan meeting with Members of Congress on rural health. Secretary Azar and the Members had a productive conversation on how to address the challenges facing Americans living in rural settings. They discussed the work already being done by the Department to address rural health challenges, including revisions to the Medicare Wage Index, reduction of regulatory burdens, addressing maternal mortality and morbidity and the opioid crisis, and lowering the cost of prescription drugs.

*November 27- [OCR Secures \\$2.175 Million HIPAA Settlement after Hospitals Failed to Properly Notify HHS of a Breach of Unsecured Protected Health Information](#). In an agreement with the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Sentara Hospitals (Sentara) have agreed to take corrective actions and pay \$2.175 million to settle potential violations of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Breach Notification and Privacy Rules. Sentara is comprised of 12 acute care hospitals with more than 300 sites of care throughout Virginia and North Carolina.

Fact Sheets

*November 21- [Delay of Inclusion of Territories in Medicaid Drug Rebate Program; Covered Outpatient Drug Interim Final Rule \(CMS 2345-IFC3\)](#). On February 1, 2016, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) published the "Medicaid Program; Covered Outpatient Drug" Final Rule with Comment Period (CMS-2345-FC) in the Federal Register (81 FR 5170). As part of that final rule with comment period, we amended the regulatory definitions of "States" and "United States" to include the U.S. Territories (American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands) beginning April 1, 2017.

*November 25- [Direct Contracting: Professional and Global](#). Direct Contracting creates a new opportunity for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (Innovation Center) to test an array of financial risk-sharing arrangements to reduce Medicare expenditures while preserving or enhancing the quality of care furnished to beneficiaries.

Blogs

*November 21- [Rural Health at CMS: What's Been Done and What's to Come](#). For the third time in my tenure at CMS, I am excited to recognize National Rural Health Day and the work CMS is doing to advance the health of nearly 60 million rural Americans. Residents of rural communities face unique barriers – higher rates of poverty, difficulty traveling long distances to a hospital or doctor's office, and lack of access to innovations. Recent CDC data shows that people in rural areas have higher rates of preventable deaths than people in urban areas.

*November 21- [Why Enroll in 2020 Marketplace Coverage](#). You may think you don't need health insurance, that it's too expensive, or not worth the trouble. While nobody plans to get sick or hurt, bad things happen, even to healthy people. The good news is that enrolling in a 2020 Marketplace health plan may be more affordable and easier than you think. You have until December 15, 2019 to sign up. Coverage starts January 1, 2020.

*November 21- [Smoke-free is the way to be](#). Every year, more people die from lung cancer than any other type of cancer, and smoking is the leading cause. In addition to lung cancer, smoking can cause other health problems, like heart disease and respiratory diseases. More than 34 million people in the U.S. still smoke tobacco, but quitting smoking can help prevent these health problems. You can quit smoking today, and Medicare can help.

*November 26- [3 ways to save on Medicare costs](#). You may be able to get help paying for your health and prescription drug costs. Even if you aren't sure you're eligible, it's worth learning more about these 3 ways to save on Medicare costs.

For more information please email partnership@cms.hhs.gov