

Questions & Answers
409—Rural Hospice Demonstration

Is an inpatient facility that opens in 2006 eligible for the demonstration?

Proposals are due June 6, 2005 and must demonstrate that the hospice should be able to start the demonstration by Fall 2005.

How is rural area defined?

Rural area is defined in the solicitation under Eligibility Criteria section. The solicitation can be found on the Rural Hospice webpage. The URL is: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/researchers/demos/rmbh/default.asp>.

Is the interpretation of "preponderance" to mean "majority"?

Preponderance of patients means almost all of the patients at the hospice facility meet the criteria for the demonstration; i.e., the patients in the demonstration are rural Medicare beneficiaries who lack an appropriate caregiver and elect their hospice care from a hospice selected for the demonstration.

What are the guidelines to determine whether a hospice patient meets General Inpatient Care or Continuous Home Care level of care?

There are specific guidelines that constitute requiring General Inpatient Care (GIP) or Continuous Home Care (CHC). These are found in the Code of Federal Regulations, 42 CFR 418 et seq., as well as in the manuals that apply regardless of the demonstration.

Manual sections pertaining to hospice, which are located on the Medicare website under Manuals in Internet Only Manual (IOM), are Pub 100-04 chapter 11 & Pub 100-02 Chapter 9. In addition, there was a Program Memorandum on CHC that can also be found on the website, CR 2556, (hotlink: http://www.cms.hhs.gov/manuals/pm_trans/a03016.pdf). All of the information discussed plus other useful information and hospice links/resources can be found on the hospice website: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/providers/hospiceps/>.

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In the demonstration, the hospice patients who are rural Medicare beneficiaries and lack an appropriate caregiver will receive the full range of hospice services in a facility of up to 20-beds. Does this mean that a hospice in the demonstration is paid at the general inpatient rate for all care?

No, a hospice in the demonstration is not paid at the general inpatient rate for all care. The demonstration hospice will serve as the individual's "home," not as an inpatient facility only, and as such, the demonstration hospice needs to comply with the level of care requirements, including but not limited to proper documentation of the medical record to support the level of care provided per day per patient. The levels of hospice care that apply to the demonstration are routine home care, continuous home care, and general inpatient care, as discussed in the solicitation.