



CMS Snapshot

October 22-29, 2020

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

All releases below are from 2pm Thursday, October 22 through 2pm Thursday, October 29, 2020.

News Releases

*October 25- [States Begin Detailing Specific Use of 150 Million BinaxNOW COVID-19 Tests Distributed by Trump Administration](#). Four weeks after the Trump Administration [announced](#) it would deploy 150 million state-of-the-art Abbott BinaxNOW COVID-19 tests nationally to assist Governors' ongoing reopening efforts, states have begun to report back where they are choosing to distribute the rapid, point of care tests. Of the states who have provided preliminary reports, use of the BinaxNOW allocations are largely being deployed to local health departments, K-12 schools and institutes of higher education, nursing homes, hospitals and correctional facilities.

*October 26- [Preview 2021 Plans and Prices on HealthCare.gov Ahead of the Upcoming Federal Health Insurance Exchange Open Enrollment Period](#). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced that starting today consumers can preview 2021 healthcare plans and prices on HealthCare.gov. This is an opportunity for consumers to compare coverage options ahead of Open Enrollment for the Federal Health Insurance Exchange, which officially kicks-off on November 1.

*October 27- [New CMS Proposals Streamline Medicare Coverage, Payment, and Coding for Innovative New Technologies and Provide Beneficiaries with Diabetes Access to More Therapy Choices](#). Today, under the leadership of President Trump, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), is proposing new changes to Medicare Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotic Devices and Supplies (DMEPOS) coverage and payment policies. This rule would provide more choices for beneficiaries with diabetes, while streamlining the process for innovators in getting their technologies approved for coverage, payment, and coding by Medicare.

*October 28- [HHS, DOD Collaborate on Plans to Purchase of Lilly Investigational Therapeutic to Treat COVID-19](#). As part of the Trump Administration's goal of delivering life-saving vaccines and therapeutics in record time through Operation Warp Speed, the U.S. Department of Health

and Human Services ([HHS](#)) and Department of Defense ([DoD](#)) today announced an agreement with Eli Lilly and Company to purchase the first doses of the company's COVID-19 investigational antibody therapeutic bamlanivimab, also known as LY-CoV555. These doses will be available for patient care if the U.S. Food and Drug Administration ([FDA](#)) authorizes use of the therapeutic, as outlined in agency [guidance](#).

*October 28- [Trump Administration Acts to Ensure Coverage of Life-Saving COVID-19 Vaccines & Therapeutics](#). Under President Trump's leadership, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is taking steps to ensure all Americans, including the nation's seniors, have access to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) vaccine at no cost when it becomes available. Today, the agency released a comprehensive plan with proactive measures to remove regulatory barriers and ensure consistent coverage and payment for the administration of an eventual vaccine for millions of Americans. CMS released a set of toolkits for providers, states and insurers to help the health care system prepare to swiftly administer the vaccine once it is available.

*October 29- [CMS Completes Historic Price Transparency Initiative](#). Today, under President Trump's leadership, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) along with the Departments of Labor and the Department of the Treasury issued a historic final rule on price transparency, helping to ensure every American knows how much their healthcare will cost in advance and allowing them to make fully informed and value-conscious decisions.

*October 29- [NEWS ALERT OCTOBER 29, 2020](#). Statement from CMS Administrator Seema Verma: "New York City's failure to resolve its outstanding debts owed to the federal taxpayers resulted in \$3.3 million in World Trade Center Health Program funds being offset to resolve a debt to taxpayers. We owe an even greater debt to our 9/11 heroes, and our team has worked together with the U.S. Department of Treasury to protect the critical federal funding designated for the World Trade Center Health Program. We returned the \$3.3 million to FDNY and we will work to continue to hold New York City accountable for its outstanding Medicare debt."

*October 29- [Price Transparency Press Call Remarks by Administrator Seema Verma](#). "Price Transparency Press Call Remarks by Administrator Seema Verma Today's price transparency announcement marks the culmination of four years of groundbreaking reforms. When I started as Administrator back in 2017, I worked with President Trump to set the commonsense goal of reducing health care costs. We set out to do so not by setting prices and taking over the health care system as had failed so often in the past, but by introducing free market principles – using competition to drive costs down."

*October 29- [CMS Advances Seven Finalists in Artificial Intelligence Health Outcomes Challenge](#). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) today announced seven finalists who will advance to the final round of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Health Outcomes Challenge. This multi-stage competition launched last year with more than 300 entities proposing AI solutions

for predicting patient health outcomes aimed at revolutionizing healthcare for potential use by the CMS Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation.

Fact Sheets

*October 26- [FEDERAL HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE 2021 OPEN ENROLLMENT](#). The Federal Health Insurance Exchange (also known as the Marketplace) Open Enrollment Period runs from November 1, 2020 to December 15, 2020, for coverage starting on January 1, 2021. Similar to previous years, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is taking a strategic and cost-effective approach to inform individuals about Open Enrollment, deliver a smooth enrollment experience, and use consumer feedback to drive ongoing improvements across the Exchange platform.

*October 27- [Medicare CY 2021 Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics and Supplies \(DMEPOS\) Policy Issues and Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System \(HCPCS\) Level II Proposed Rule \(CMS-1738-P\)](#). On October 27, 2020, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a proposed rule that establishes methodologies for adjusting the Medicare durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics, and supplies (DMEPOS) fee schedule amounts using information from the Medicare DMEPOS competitive bidding program for items furnished on or after April 1, 2021 or the date immediately following the duration of the emergency period described in section 1135(g)(1)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320b-5(g)(1)(B)), whichever is later; certain policies and procedures regarding the submission and evaluation of Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) Level II code applications; and procedures for making benefit category determinations and payment determinations for DME, prosthetics, orthotics, and other new items and services under Medicare Part B to prevent delays in coverage of such items and services.

*October 28- [Fourth COVID-19 Interim Final Rule with Comment Period \(IFC-4\)](#). The Trump Administration has taken historic and unprecedented steps to equip the American healthcare system with maximum flexibility to respond to the Public Health Emergency (PHE) for COVID-19, and to ensure consumers have affordable access to testing and treatment for COVID-19. In anticipation of when a vaccine becomes available, the Trump Administration and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) are taking actions to ensure the participants in our programs have access to a Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-authorized or approved COVID-19 vaccine at no cost.

*October 28- [Aetna Pays \\$1,000,000 to Settle Three HIPAA Breaches](#). Aetna Life Insurance Company and the affiliated covered entity (Aetna) has agreed to pay \$1,000,000 to the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and to adopt a corrective action plan to settle potential violations of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy and Security Rules. Aetna is an American managed health

care company that sells traditional and consumer-directed health insurance and related services.

*October 28- [Trump Administration Distributes Incentive Payments to Nursing Homes Curbing COVID-19 Deaths and Infections](#). Under the leadership of President Trump, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), is announcing it will distribute approximately \$333 million in first round performance payments to over 10,000 nursing homes. These nursing homes are being recognized for demonstrating significant reductions in COVID-19 related infections and deaths between August and September. Protecting vulnerable nursing home residents has been a top priority for the Trump Administration.

*October 29- [Trump Administration Finalizes Rule Requiring Health Insurers to Disclose Price and Cost-Sharing Information](#). Today, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Labor, and the Department of the Treasury issued a final rule on price transparency, helping to ensure Americans know how much care will cost in advance and allowing them to make fully informed and value-conscious decisions. The rule requires that almost all health insurance companies and self-insured plans disclose pricing and cost-sharing information.

*October 29- [HHS Extends Compliance Dates for Information Blocking and Health IT Certification Requirements in 21st Century Cures Act Final Rule](#). Responding to public health threats posed by the coronavirus pandemic, today the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (ONC) released an interim final rule with comment period that extends the compliance dates and timeframes necessary to meet certain requirements related to information blocking and Conditions and Maintenance of Certification (CoC/MoC) requirements.

*October 29- [Transparency in Coverage Final Rule Fact Sheet \(CMS-9915-F\)](#). The Transparency in Coverage final rule released today by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Department of Labor, and the Department of the Treasury (the Departments) delivers on President Trump's executive order on Improving Price and Quality Transparency in American Healthcare to Put Patients First.^[1] This final rule is a historic step toward putting health care price information in the hands of consumers and other stakeholders, advancing the Administration's goal to ensure consumers are empowered with the critical information they need to make informed health care decisions.

Blogs

*October 25- [Preview 2021 plans & prices today!](#) Before you enroll in or renew a 2021 plan starting November 1, you can preview 2021 plans with personalized price

estimates. **Important:** This is just an estimate. You'll see exact prices when you submit an application.

*October 26- [Next time, get your "Medicare & You" handbook electronically!](#) Perhaps you just got your paper copy of the 2021 ["Medicare & You" handbook](#) in the mail, as you did last year, and the year before that. And the year before that. Maybe it's time to make this your last paper copy.

*October 27- [2019 Quality Payment Program \(QPP\) Performance Results](#). At the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), our number one priority continues to be getting patients the care they need as we confront the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. We are committed to reducing clinicians' administrative burden related to the Quality Payment Program, so clinicians can focus on patient care during this public health emergency.

*October 29- [2021 Open Enrollment is just days away!](#) Starting November 1, you can enroll in or renew a 2021 Marketplace plan. As you get ready to submit your application, here are a few important reminders:

CMS has developed a [Virtual Toolkit](#) to help you stay informed on CMS and HHS materials available on the COVID-19. Please share these materials, bookmark the page, and check back often for the most up-to-date information. For more information, please email partnership@cms.hhs.gov