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42 U.S. Code § 1395w-23

Payments to Medicare+Choice organizations

(a) Payments to organizations

(1) Monthly payments

(A) In general

Under a contract under section 1395w–27 of this title and subject to subsections (e), (g), (i), and (*l*) and section 1395w–28(e)(4) of this title, the Secretary shall make monthly payments under this section in advance to each Medicare+Choice organization, with respect to coverage of an individual under this part in a Medicare+Choice payment area for a month, in an amount determined as follows:

(i) Payment before 2006

For years before 2006, the payment amount shall be equal to $\frac{1}{12}$ of the annual MA capitation rate (as calculated under subsection (c)(1)) with respect to that individual for that area, adjusted under subparagraph (C) and reduced by the amount of any reduction elected under section 1395w–24(f)(1)(E) of this title.

(ii) Payment for original fee-for-service benefits beginning with 2006

For years beginning with 2006, the amount specified in subparagraph (B).

(B) Payment amount for original fee-for-service benefits beginning with 2006

(i) Payment of bid for plans with bids below benchmark

In the case of a plan for which there are average per capita monthly savings described in section 1395w–24(b)(3)(C) or 1395w–24(b)(4)(C) of this title, as the case may be, the amount specified in this subparagraph is equal to the unadjusted MA statutory non-drug monthly bid amount, adjusted under subparagraph (C) and (if applicable) under subparagraphs (F) and (G), plus the amount (if any) of any rebate under subparagraph (E).

(ii) Payment of benchmark for plans with bids at or above benchmark

In the case of a plan for which there are no average per capita monthly savings described in section 1395w–24(b)(3)(C) or 1395w–24(b)(4)(C) of this title, as the case may be, the amount specified in this subparagraph is equal to the MA area-specific non-drug monthly benchmark amount, adjusted under subparagraph (C) and (if applicable) under subparagraphs (F) and (G).

(iii) Payment of benchmark for MSA plans

Notwithstanding clauses (i) and (ii), in the case of an MSA plan, the amount specified in this subparagraph is equal to the MA area-specific non-drug monthly benchmark amount, adjusted under subparagraph (C).

(iv) Authority to apply frailty adjustment under PACE payment rules for certain specialized MA plans for special needs individuals

(I) In general

Notwithstanding the preceding provisions of this paragraph, for plan year 2011 and subsequent plan years, in the case of a plan described in subclause (II), the Secretary may apply the payment rules under section 1395eee(d) of this title (other than paragraph (3) of such section) rather than the payment rules that would otherwise apply under this part, but only to the extent necessary to reflect the costs of treating high concentrations of frail individuals.

(II) Plan described

A plan described in this subclause is a specialized MA plan for special needs individuals described in section 1395w–28(b)(6)(B)(ii) of this title that is fully integrated with capitated contracts with States for Medicaid benefits, including long-term care, and that have similar average levels of frailty (as determined by the Secretary) as the PACE program.

(C) Demographic adjustment, including adjustment for health status

(i) In general

Subject to subparagraph (I), the Secretary shall adjust the payment amount under subparagraph (A)(i) and the amount specified under subparagraph (B)(i), (B)(ii), and (B)(iii) for such risk factors as age, disability status, gender, institutional status, and such other factors as the Secretary determines to be appropriate, including adjustment for health status under paragraph (3), so as to ensure actuarial equivalence. The Secretary may add to, modify, or substitute for such adjustment factors if such changes will improve the determination of actuarial equivalence.

(ii) Application of coding adjustment

For 2006 and each subsequent year:

(I) In applying the adjustment under clause (i) for health status to payment amounts, the Secretary shall ensure that such adjustment reflects changes in treatment and coding practices in the fee-for-service sector and reflects differences in coding patterns between Medicare Advantage plans and providers under part [1] A and B to the extent that the Secretary has identified such differences.

(II) In order to ensure payment accuracy, the Secretary shall annually conduct an analysis of the differences described in subclause (I). The Secretary shall complete such analysis by a date necessary to ensure that the results of such analysis are incorporated on a timely basis into the risk scores for 2008 and subsequent years. In conducting such analysis, the Secretary shall use data submitted with respect to 2004 and subsequent years, as available and updated as appropriate.

(III) In calculating each year's adjustment, the adjustment factor shall be for 2014, not less than the adjustment factor applied for 2010, plus 1.5 percentage points; for each of years 2015 through 2018, not less than the adjustment factor applied for the previous year, plus 0.25 percentage point; and for 2019 and each subsequent year, not less than 5.9 percent.

(IV) Such adjustment shall be applied to risk scores until the Secretary implements risk adjustment using Medicare Advantage diagnostic, cost, and use data.

(iii) Improvements to risk adjustment for special needs individuals with chronic health conditions

(I) In general

For 2011 and subsequent years, for purposes of the adjustment under clause (i) with respect to individuals described in subclause (II), the Secretary shall use a risk score that reflects the known underlying risk profile and chronic health status of similar individuals. Such risk score shall be used instead of the default risk score for new enrollees in Medicare Advantage plans that are not

specialized MA plans for special needs individuals (as defined in section 1395w–28(b)(6) of this title).

(II) Individuals described

An individual described in this subclause is a special needs individual described in subsection (b)(6)(B)(iii) [2] who enrolls in a specialized MA plan for special needs individuals on or after January 1, 2011.

(III) Evaluation

For 2011 and periodically thereafter, the Secretary shall evaluate and revise the risk adjustment system under this subparagraph in order to, as accurately as possible, account for higher medical and care coordination costs associated with frailty, individuals with multiple, comorbid chronic conditions, and individuals with a diagnosis of mental illness, and also to account for costs that may be associated with higher concentrations of beneficiaries with those conditions.

(IV) Publication of evaluation and revisions

The Secretary shall publish, as part of an announcement under subsection (b), a description of any evaluation conducted under subclause (III) during the preceding year and any revisions made under such subclause as a result of such evaluation.

(D) Separate payment for Federal drug subsidies

In the case of an enrollee in an MA–PD plan, the MA organization offering such plan also receives—

(i) subsidies under section 1395w–115 of this title (other than under subsection (g)); and

(ii) reimbursement for premium and cost-sharing reductions for low-income individuals under section 1395w–114(c)(1)(C) of this title.

(E) Payment of rebate for plans with bids below benchmark

In the case of a plan for which there are average per capita monthly savings described in section 1395w–24(b)(3)(C) or 1395w–24(b)(4)(C) of this title, as the case may be, the amount specified in this subparagraph is the amount of the monthly rebate computed under section 1395w–24(b)(1)(C)(i) of this title for that plan and year (as reduced by the amount of any credit provided under section 1395w–24(b)(1)(C)(iv) [2] of this title).

(F) Adjustment for intra-area variations

(i) Intra-regional variations

In the case of payment with respect to an MA regional plan for an MA region, the Secretary shall also adjust the amounts specified under subparagraphs (B)(i) and (B)(ii) in a manner to take into account variations in MA local payment rates under this part among the different MA local areas included in such region.

(ii) Intra-service area variations

In the case of payment with respect to an MA local plan for a service area that covers more than one MA local area, the Secretary shall also adjust the amounts specified under subparagraphs (B)(i) and (B)(ii) in a manner to take into account variations in MA local payment rates under this part among the different MA local areas included in such service area.

(G) Adjustment relating to risk adjustment

The Secretary shall adjust payments with respect to MA plans as necessary to ensure that—

(i) the sum of—

(I) the monthly payment made under subparagraph (A)(ii); and

(II) the MA monthly basic beneficiary premium under section 1395w–24(b)(2)(A) of this title; equals

(ii) the unadjusted MA statutory non-drug monthly bid amount, adjusted in the manner described in subparagraph (C) and, for an MA regional plan, subparagraph (F).

(H) Special rule for end-stage renal disease

The Secretary shall establish separate rates of payment to a Medicare+Choice organization with respect to classes of individuals determined to have end-stage renal disease and enrolled in a Medicare+Choice plan of the organization. Such rates of payment shall be actuarially equivalent to rates that would have been paid with respect to other enrollees in the MA payment area (or such other area as specified by the Secretary) under the provisions of this section as in effect before December 8, 2003. In accordance with regulations, the Secretary shall provide for the application of the seventh sentence of section 1395rr(b)(7) of this title to payments under this section covering the provision of renal dialysis treatment in the same manner as such sentence applies to composite rate payments described in such sentence. In establishing such rates, the Secretary shall provide for appropriate adjustments to increase each rate to reflect the demonstration rate (including the risk adjustment methodology associated with such rate) of the social health maintenance organization end-stage renal disease capitation demonstrations (established by section 2355 of the Deficit Reduction Act of 1984, as amended by section 13567(b) of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993), and shall compute such rates by taking into account such factors as renal treatment modality, age, and the underlying cause of the end-stage renal disease. The Secretary may apply the competitive bidding methodology provided for in this section, with appropriate adjustments to account for the risk adjustment methodology applied to end stage renal disease payments.

(I) Improvements to risk adjustment for 2019 and subsequent years

(i) In general

In order to determine the appropriate adjustment for health status under subparagraph (C)(i), the following shall apply:

(I) Taking into account total number of diseases or conditions

The Secretary shall take into account the total number of diseases or conditions of an individual enrolled in an MA plan. The Secretary shall make an additional adjustment under such subparagraph as the number of diseases or conditions of an individual increases.

(II) Using at least 2 years of diagnostic data

The Secretary may use at least 2 years of diagnosis data.

(III) Providing separate adjustments for dual eligible individuals

With respect to individuals who are dually eligible for benefits under this subchapter and subchapter XIX, the Secretary shall make separate adjustments for each of the following:

(aa) Full-benefit dual eligible individuals (as defined insection 1396u–5(c)(6) of this title).

(bb) Such individuals not described in item (aa).

(IV) Evaluation of mental health and substance use disorders

The Secretary shall evaluate the impact of including additional diagnosis codes related to mental health and substance use disorders in the risk adjustment model.

(V) Evaluation of chronic kidney disease

The Secretary shall evaluate the impact of including the severity of chronic kidney disease in the risk adjustment model.

(VI) Evaluation of payment rates for end-stage renal disease

The Secretary shall evaluate whether other factors (in addition to those described in subparagraph (H)) should be taken into consideration when computing payment rates under such subparagraph.

(ii) Phased-in implementation

The Secretary shall phase-in any changes to risk adjustment payment amounts under subparagraph (C)(i) under this subparagraph over a 3-year period, beginning with 2019, with such changes being fully implemented for 2022 and subsequent years.

(iii) Opportunity for review and public comment

The Secretary shall provide an opportunity for review of the proposed changes to such risk adjustment payment amounts under this subparagraph and a public comment period of not less than 60 days before implementing such changes.

(2) Adjustment to reflect number of enrollees

(A) In general

The amount of payment under this subsection may be retroactively adjusted to take into account any difference between the actual number of individuals enrolled with an organization under this part and the number of such individuals estimated to be so enrolled in determining the amount of the advance payment.

(B) Special rule for certain enrollees

(i) In general

Subject to clause (ii), the Secretary may make retroactive adjustments under subparagraph (A) to take into account individuals enrolled during the period beginning on the date on which the individual enrolls with a Medicare+Choice organization under a plan operated, sponsored, or contributed to by the individual's employer or former employer (or the employer or former employer of the individual's spouse) and ending on the date on which the individual is enrolled in the organization under this part, except that for purposes of making such retroactive adjustments under this subparagraph, such period may not exceed 90 days.

(ii) Exception

No adjustment may be made under clause (i) with respect to any individual who does not certify that the organization provided the individual with the disclosure statement described in section 1395w–22(c) of this title at the time the individual enrolled with the organization.

(3) Establishment of risk adjustment factors

(A) Report

The Secretary shall develop, and submit to Congress by not later than March 1, 1999, a report on the method of risk adjustment of payment rates under this section, to be implemented under subparagraph (C), that accounts for variations in per capita costs based on health status. Such report shall include an evaluation of such method by an outside, independent actuary of the actuarial soundness of the proposal.

(B) Data collection

In order to carry out this paragraph, the Secretary shall require Medicare+Choice organizations (and eligible organizations with risk-sharing contracts under section 1395mm of this title) to submit data regarding inpatient hospital services for periods beginning on or after July 1, 1997, and data regarding other services and other information as the Secretary deems necessary for periods beginning on or after July 1, 1998. The Secretary may not require an organization to submit such data before January 1, 1998.

(C) Initial implementation

(i) In general

The Secretary shall first provide for implementation of a risk adjustment methodology that accounts for variations in per capita costs based on health status and other demographic factors for payments by no later than January 1, 2000.

(ii) Phase-in

Except as provided in clause (iv), such risk adjustment methodology shall be implemented in a phased-in manner so that the methodology insofar as it makes adjustments to capitation rates for health status applies to—

(I) 10 percent of $\frac{1}{12}$ of the annual Medicare+Choice capitation rate in 2000 and each succeeding year through 2003;

(II) 30 percent of such capitation rate in 2004;

(III) 50 percent of such capitation rate in 2005;

(IV) 75 percent of such capitation rate in 2006; and

(V) 100 percent of such capitation rate in 2007 and succeeding years.

(iii) Data for risk adjustment methodology

Such risk adjustment methodology for 2004 and each succeeding year, shall be based on data from inpatient hospital and ambulatory settings.

(iv) Full implementation of risk adjustment for congestive heart failure enrollees for 2001

(I) Exemption from phase-in

Subject to subclause (II), the Secretary shall fully implement the risk adjustment methodology described in clause (i) with respect to each individual who has had a qualifying congestive heart failure inpatient diagnosis (as determined by the Secretary under such risk adjustment methodology) during the period beginning on July 1, 1999, and ending on June 30, 2000, and who is enrolled in a coordinated care plan that is the only coordinated care plan offered on January 1, 2001, in the service area of the individual.

(II) Period of application

Subclause (I) shall only apply during the 1-year period beginning on January 1, 2001.

(D) Uniform application to all types of plans

Subject to section 1395w–28(e)(4) of this title, the methodology shall be applied uniformly without regard to the type of plan.

(4) Payment rule for federally qualified health center services

If an individual who is enrolled with an MA plan under this part receives a service from a federally qualified health center that has a written agreement with the MA organization that offers such plan for providing such a service (including any agreement required under section 1395w–27(e)(3) of this title)—

(A) the Secretary shall pay the amount determined under section 1395*l*(a)(3)(B) of this title directly to the federally qualified health center not less frequently than quarterly; and

(B) the Secretary shall not reduce the amount of the monthly payments under this subsection as a result of the application of subparagraph (A).