
42 U.S. Code § 1395yy

Payment to skilled nursing facilities for routine service costs

(a) Per diem limitations

The Secretary, in determining the amount of the payments which may be made under this subchapter with respect to routine service costs of extended care services shall not recognize as reasonable (in the efficient delivery of health services) per diem costs of such services to the extent that such per diem costs exceed the following per diem limits, except as otherwise provided in this section:

- (1) With respect to freestanding skilled nursing facilities located in urban areas, the limit shall be equal to 112 percent of the mean per diem routine service costs for freestanding skilled nursing facilities located in urban areas.
- (2) With respect to freestanding skilled nursing facilities located in rural areas, the limit shall be equal to 112 percent of the mean per diem routine service costs for freestanding skilled nursing facilities located in rural areas.
- (3) With respect to hospital-based skilled nursing facilities located in urban areas, the limit shall be equal to the sum of the limit for freestanding skilled nursing facilities located in urban areas, plus 50 percent of the amount by which 112 percent of the mean per diem routine service costs for hospital-based skilled nursing facilities located in urban areas exceeds the limit for freestanding skilled nursing facilities located in urban areas.
- (4) With respect to hospital-based skilled nursing facilities located in rural areas, the limit shall be equal to the sum of the limit for freestanding skilled nursing facilities located in rural areas, plus 50 percent of the amount by which 112 percent of the mean per diem routine service costs for hospital-based skilled nursing facilities located in rural areas exceeds the limit for freestanding skilled nursing facilities located in rural areas.

In applying this subsection the Secretary shall make appropriate adjustments to the labor related portion of the costs based upon an appropriate wage index, and shall, for cost reporting periods beginning on or after October 1, 1992, on or after October 1, 1995, and every 2 years thereafter, provide for an update to the per diem cost limits described in this subsection, except that the limits effective for cost reporting periods beginning on or after October 1, 1997, shall be based on the limits effective for cost reporting periods beginning on or after October 1, 1996.

(b) Excess overhead allocations for hospital-based facilities

With respect to a hospital-based skilled nursing facility, the Secretary may not recognize as reasonable the portion of the cost differences between hospital-based and freestanding skilled nursing facilities attributable to excess overhead allocations.

(c) Adjustments in limitations; publication of data

The Secretary may make adjustments in the limits set forth in subsection (a) with respect to any skilled nursing facility to the extent the Secretary deems appropriate, based upon case mix or circumstances beyond

the control of the facility. The Secretary shall publish the data and criteria to be used for purposes of this subsection on an annual basis.

(d) Access to skilled nursing facilities

(1) Subject to subsection (e), any skilled nursing facility may choose to be paid under this subsection on the basis of a prospective payment for all routine service costs (including the costs of services required to attain or maintain the highest practicable physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being of each resident eligible for benefits under this subchapter) and capital-related costs of extended care services provided in a cost reporting period if such facility had, in the preceding cost reporting period, fewer than 1,500 patient days with respect to which payments were made under this subchapter. Such prospective payment shall be in lieu of payments which would otherwise be made for routine service costs pursuant to section 1395x(v) of this title and subsections (a) through (c) of this section and capital-related costs pursuant to section 1395x(v) of this title. This subsection shall not apply to a facility for any cost reporting period immediately following a cost reporting period in which such facility had 1,500 or more patient days with respect to which payments were made under this subchapter, without regard to whether payments were made under this subsection during such preceding cost reporting period.

- (2)
- (A) The amount of the payment under this section shall be determined on a per diem basis.
 - (B) Subject to the limitations of subparagraph (C), for skilled nursing facilities located—
 - (i) in an urban area, the amount shall be equal to 105 percent of the mean of the per diem reasonable routine service and capital-related costs of extended care services for skilled nursing facilities in urban areas within the same region, determined without regard to the limitations of subsection (a) and adjusted for different area wage levels, and
 - (ii) in a rural area the amount shall be equal to 105 percent of the mean of the per diem reasonable routine service and capital-related costs of extended care services for skilled nursing facilities in rural areas within the same region, determined without regard to the limitations of subsection (a) and adjusted for different area wage levels.
 - (C) The per diem amounts determined under subparagraph (B) shall not exceed the limit on routine service costs determined under subsection (a) with respect to the facility, adjusted to take into account average capital-related costs with respect to the type and location of the facility.
- (3) For purposes of this subsection, urban and rural areas shall be determined in the same manner as for purposes of subsection (a), and the term “region” shall have the same meaning as under section 1395ww(d)(2)(D) of this title.
- (4) The Secretary shall establish the prospective payment amounts for cost reporting periods beginning in a fiscal year at least 90 days prior to the beginning of such fiscal year, on the basis of the most recent data available for a 12-month period. A skilled nursing facility must notify the Secretary of its intention to be paid pursuant to this subsection for a cost reporting period no later than 30 days before the beginning of that period.
- (5) The Secretary shall provide for a simplified cost report to be filed by facilities being paid pursuant to this subsection, which shall require only the cost information necessary for determining prospective payment amounts pursuant to paragraph (2) and reasonable costs of ancillary services.
- (6) In lieu of payment on a cost basis for ancillary services provided by a facility which is being paid pursuant to this subsection, the Secretary may pay for such ancillary services on a reasonable charge basis if the Secretary determines that such payment basis will provide an equitable level of reimbursement and will ease the reporting burden of the facility.
- (7) In computing the rates of payment to be made under this subsection, there shall be taken into account the

costs described in the last sentence of section 1395x(v)(1)(E) of this title (relating to compliance with nursing facility requirements and of conducting nurse aide training and competency evaluation programs and competency evaluation programs).

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