

Medicare Physicians and Other Health Professionals

Billing Service Companies

We will identify and review the relationships among billing companies and the physicians and other Medicare providers who use their services. We will also identify the various types of arrangements physicians and other Medicare providers have with billing services and determine the impact of these arrangements on the physicians' billings.

(OAS; W-00-05-35162; various reviews; expected issue date: FY 2005; new start)

Medicare Payments to VA Physicians

We will assess the validity of Medicare reimbursement for services billed by physicians who receive remuneration from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for the time the physicians reported as being on duty at a VA hospital. Physicians employed by VA may not bill Medicare for services rendered at other hospitals during the times they were on duty at a VA hospital. Our preliminary work has identified a number of VA physicians who received Medicare reimbursements totaling approximately \$105 million for services rendered between January 1, 2001 and June 30, 2003. Using time reporting and payroll documentation from the VA, we will identify the services rendered while the physicians were reported as on duty at the VA hospitals and remunerated for such duty.

(OAS; W-00-04-35155; A-00-00-0000; expected issue date: FY 2005; work in progress)

Care Plan Oversight

We will evaluate the efficacy of controls over Medicare payments for care plan oversight claims submitted by physicians. Under the Medicare home health and hospice benefits, care plan oversight is physician supervision of beneficiaries who need complex or multidisciplinary care requiring ongoing physician involvement. Reimbursement for care plan oversight increased from \$15 million in 2000 to \$41 million in 2001. We will assess whether these services were provided in accordance with Medicare regulations.

(OAS; W-00-04-35114; A-02-00-00000; expected issue date: FY 2005; work in progress)

Ordering Physicians Excluded From Medicare

This review will quantify the extent of services, if any, ordered by physicians excluded from Federal health care programs and the amount paid by Medicare Part B. Under Federal regulation, physicians who are excluded from Federal health care programs generally are precluded from ordering or performing services for Medicare beneficiaries. During a current review, we identified a significant number of services that had been ordered by excluded physicians.

(OAS; W-00-04-35116; various reviews; expected issue date: FY 2005; work in progress)