

12866 (September 1993, Regulatory Planning and Review), the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) (September 16, 1980, Pub. L. 96-354), section 1102(b) of the Social Security Act, the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-4), and Executive Order 13132.

Executive Order 12866 directs agencies to assess all costs and benefits of available regulatory alternatives and, if regulation is necessary, to select regulatory approaches that maximize net benefits (including potential economic, environmental, public health and safety effects, distributive impacts, and equity). As stated in Section IV of this notice, we estimate that the overall effect of these changes in the premium will be a cost to voluntary (section 1818 and 1818A) enrollees of about \$138 million. Therefore, this notice is a major rule as defined in Title 5, United States Code, section 804(2) and is an economically significant rule under Executive Order 12866.

The RFA requires agencies to analyze options for regulatory relief of small entities. For purposes of the RFA, small entities include small businesses, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies. Most hospitals and most other providers and suppliers are small entities, either by nonprofit status or by having revenues of \$6 million to \$29 million in any 1 year. Individuals and States are not considered to be small entities. We have determined that this notice will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. Therefore, we are not preparing an analysis for the RFA.

In addition, section 1102(b) of the Act requires us to prepare a regulatory impact analysis if a rule may have a significant impact on the operations of a substantial number of small rural hospitals. This analysis must conform to the provisions of section 604 of the RFA. For purposes of section 1102(b) of the Act, we define a small rural hospital as a hospital that is located outside of a Metropolitan Statistical Area and has fewer than 100 beds. We have determined that this notice will not have a significant effect on the operations of a substantial number of small rural hospitals. Therefore, we are not preparing an analysis for section 1102(b) of the Act.

Section 202 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 also requires that agencies assess anticipated costs and benefits before issuing any rule that may result in expenditures in any 1 year by State, local, or tribal governments, in the aggregate, or by the private sector, of \$110 million. This notice has no consequential effect on

State, local, or tribal governments or on the private sector.

Executive Order 13132 establishes certain requirements that an agency must meet when it promulgates a rule that imposes substantial direct requirement costs on State and local governments, preempts State law, or otherwise has Federalism implications. This notice will not have a substantial effect on State or local governments.

In accordance with the provisions of Executive Order 12866, this regulation was reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget.

Authority: Sections 1818(d)(2) and 1818A(d)(2) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395i-2(d)(2) and 1395i-2a(d)(2)).

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program No. 93.773, Medicare—Hospital Insurance)

Dated: September 12, 2003.

Thomas A. Scully,
Administrator, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

Dated: October 3, 2003.

Tommy G. Thompson,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 03-26457 Filed 10-16-03; 10:06 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

[CMS-4061-N]

Medicare Program: Meeting of the Advisory Panel on Medicare Education—November 20, 2003

AGENCY: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), HHS.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C.

Appendix 2, section 10(a) (Pub. L. 92-463), this notice announces a meeting of the Advisory Panel on Medicare Education (the Panel) on November 20, 2003. The Panel advises and makes recommendations to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services on opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of consumer education strategies concerning the Medicare program. This meeting is open to the public. This meeting replaces the September 18, 2003 meeting that was canceled due to inclement weather.

DATES: The meeting is scheduled for November 20, 2003 from 9:15 a.m. to 4 p.m. EST.

Deadline for Presentations and Comments: November 13, 2003, 12 noon EST.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Wyndham Washington Hotel, 1400 M Street, NW., Washington, DC 20005, (202) 429-1700.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Lynne Johnson, Health Insurance Specialist, Division of Partnership Development, Center for Beneficiary Choices, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 7500 Security Boulevard, mail stop S2-23-05, Baltimore, MD 21244-1850, (410) 786-0090. Please refer to the CMS Advisory Committees' Information Line (1-877-449-5659 toll free)/(410-786-9379 local) or the Internet (<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/faca/apme/default.asp>) for additional information and updates on committee activities, or contact Ms. Johnson via e-mail at ljohnson3@cms.hhs.gov. Press inquiries are handled through the CMS Press Office at (202) 690-6145.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 222 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 217a), as amended, grants to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (the Secretary) the authority to establish an advisory panel if the Secretary finds the panel necessary and in the public interest. The Secretary signed the charter establishing this Panel on January 21, 1999 (64 FR 7849) and approved the renewal of the charter on January 21, 2003. The Panel advises and makes recommendations to the Secretary and the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) on opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of consumer education strategies concerning the Medicare program.

The goals of the Panel are as follows:

- To develop and implement a national Medicare education program that describes the options for selecting a health plan under Medicare.
- To enhance the Federal government's effectiveness in informing the Medicare consumer, including the appropriate use of public-private partnerships.
- To expand outreach to vulnerable and underserved communities, including racial and ethnic minorities, in the context of a national Medicare education program.
- To assemble an information base of best practices for helping consumers evaluate health plan options and build a community infrastructure for information, counseling, and assistance.

The current members of the Panel are: James L. Bildner, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Tier Technologies; Dr. Jane Delgado, Chief Executive Officer, National Alliance for Hispanic Health; Joyce Dubow, Senior Policy Advisor, Public Policy Institute, American Association of Retired Persons (AARP); Clayton Fong, President and Chief Executive Officer, National Asian Pacific Center on Aging; Timothy Fuller, Executive Director, National Gray Panthers; John Graham IV, President and Chief Executive Officer, American Society of Association Executives; Dr. William Haggett, Senior Vice President, Government Programs, Independence Blue Cross; Thomas Hall, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Cardio-Kinetics, Inc.; David Knutson, Director, Health System Studies, Park Nicollet Institute for Research and Education; Brian Lindberg, Executive Director, Consumer Coalition for Quality Health Care; Katherine Metzger, Director, Medicare and Medicaid Programs, Fallon Community Health Plan; Dr. Laurie Powers, Co-Director, Center on Self-Determination, Oregon Health Sciences University; Dr. Marlon Priest, Professor of Emergency Medicine, University of Alabama at Birmingham; Dr. Susan Reinhard, Co-Director, Center for State Health Policy, Rutgers University and Chairperson of the Advisory Panel on Medicare Education; Dr. Everard Rutledge, Vice President of Community Health, Bon Secours Health Systems, Inc.; Jay Sackman, Executive Vice President, 1199 Service Employees International Union; Dallas Salisbury, President and Chief Executive Officer, Employee Benefit Research Institute; Rosemarie Sweeney, Vice President, Socioeconomic Affairs and Policy Analysis, American Academy of Family Physicians; and Bruce Taylor, Director, Employee Benefit Policy and Plans, Verizon Communications.

The agenda for the November 20, 2003 meeting will include the following:

- Recap of the previous (May 21, 2003) meeting.
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Update and Center for Beneficiary Choices Update.
- Medicare Reform Update.
- Quality Initiatives Update.
- Website Update.
- CMS Demonstrations.
- Research and Evaluation: Sharing Research with Stakeholders.
- Public Comment.
- Listening Session with CMS Leadership.
- Next Steps.

Individuals or organizations that wish to make a 5-minute oral presentation on an agenda topic must submit a written copy of the oral presentation to Lynne Johnson, Health Insurance Specialist, Division of Partnership Development, Center for Beneficiary Choices, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 7500 Security Boulevard, Mail stop S2-23-05, Baltimore, MD 21244-1850 or by email at ljohnson3@cms.hhs.gov no later than 12 noon EST, November 13, 2003. The number of oral presentations may be limited by the time available. Individuals not wishing to make a presentation may submit written comments to Ms. Johnson by 12 noon EST, November 13, 2003. The meeting is open to the public, but attendance is limited to the space available.

Special Accommodation: Individuals requiring sign language interpretation or other special accommodations should contact Ms. Johnson at least 15 days before the meeting.

Authority: Sec. 222 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 217a) and sec. 10(a) of Pub. L. 92-463 (5 U.S.C. App. 2, sec. 10(a) and 41 CFR 102-3).

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program No. 93.733, Medicare—Hospital Insurance Program; and Program No. 93.774, Medicare—Supplementary Medical Insurance Program)

Dated: October 17, 2003.

Thomas A. Scully,

Administrator, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

[FR Doc. 03-26825 Filed 10-23-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

[CMS-1253-N]

Medicare Program; November 17, 2003, Meeting of the Practicing Physicians Advisory Council

AGENCY: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), HHS.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with section 10(a) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, this notice announces a meeting of the Practicing Physicians Advisory Council (the Council). The Council will be meeting to discuss certain proposed changes in regulations and carrier manual instructions related to physicians' services, as identified by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (the Secretary). These meetings are open to the public.

DATES: The meeting is scheduled for November 17, 2003, from 8:30 a.m. until 5 p.m. EST.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held in Room 800, 8th floor, at the Hubert H. Humphrey Building, 200 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20201.

MEETING REGISTRATION: Persons wishing to attend this meeting must contact Diana Motsiopoulos, The Council Administrative Coordinator, by email at dmotsiopoulos@cms.hhs.gov or by telephone (410) 786-3379, at least 72 hours in advance to register. Persons not registered in advance will not be permitted into the Humphrey Building and will not be permitted to attend the meeting. Persons attending the meeting will be required to show a photographic identification, preferably a valid driver's license, before entering the building.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kenneth Simon, M.D., Executive Director, Practicing Physicians Advisory Council, 7500 Security Blvd., Mail Stop C4-11-27, Baltimore, MD 21244-1850, 410-786-3379. News media representatives should contact the CMS Press Office, (202) 690-6145. Please refer to the CMS Advisory Committees Information Line (1-877-449-5659 toll free)/(410-786-9379 local) or the Internet at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/faca/ppac/default.asp> for additional information and updates on committee activities.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (the Secretary) is mandated by section 1868 of the Social Security Act (the Act) to appoint a Practicing Physicians Advisory Council (the Council) based on nominations submitted by medical organizations representing physicians. The Council meets quarterly to discuss certain proposed changes in regulations and carrier manual instructions related to physicians' services, as identified by the Secretary. To the extent feasible and consistent with statutory deadlines, the consultation must occur before publication of the proposed changes. The Council submits an annual report on its recommendations to the Secretary and the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services not later than December 31 of each year.

The Council consists of 15 physicians, each of whom must have submitted at least 250 claims for physicians' services under Medicare in the previous year. Members of the Council include both participating and nonparticipating physicians, and physicians practicing in rural and underserved urban areas. At least 11 members of the Council must be physicians as described in section