

agreement, and CMS may make determinations with respect to renewal of an intermediary agreement under § 421.110.

(b) When taking the actions specified in paragraph (a) of this section, the Secretary or CMS will consider the performance of the individual intermediary in its Medicare operations using the factors contained in the performance criteria specified in § 421.120 and the performance standards specified in § 421.122.

(c) In addition, when taking the actions listed in paragraph (a) of this section, the Secretary or CMS may consider factors relating to—

(1) Consistency in the administration of program policy;

(2) Development of intermediary expertise in difficult areas of program administration;

(3) Individual capacity of available intermediaries to serve providers as it is affected by such considerations as—

(i) Program emphasis on the number or type of providers to be served; or

(ii) Changes in data processing technology;

(4) Overdependence of the program on the capacity of an intermediary to an extent that services could be interrupted;

(5) Economy in the delivery of intermediary services;

(6) Timeliness in the delivery of intermediary services;

(7) Duplication in the availability of intermediaries;

(8) Conflict of interest between an intermediary and provider; and

(9) Any additional pertinent factors.

[45 FR 42179, June 23, 1980, as amended at 59 FR 682, Jan. 6, 1994; 71 FR 68229, Nov. 24, 2006]

**§ 421.114 Assignment and reassignment of providers by CMS.**

CMS may assign or reassign any provider to any intermediary if it determines that the assignment or reassignment will be in the best interests of the Medicare program.

[71 FR 68229, Nov. 24, 2006]

**§ 421.120 Performance criteria.**

(a) *Application of performance criteria.* As part of the intermediary evaluations authorized by section 1816(f) of

the Act, CMS periodically assesses the performance of intermediaries in their Medicare operations using performance criteria. The criteria measure and evaluate intermediary performance of functional responsibilities such as—

(1) Correct coverage and payment determinations;

(2) Responsiveness to beneficiary concerns; and

(3) Proper management of administrative funds.

(b) *Basis for criteria.* CMS will base the performance criteria on—

(1) Nationwide intermediary experience;

(2) Changes in intermediary operations due to fiscal constraints; and

(3) HFCA's objectives in achieving better performance.

(c) *Publication of criteria.* The development and revision of criteria for evaluating intermediary performance is a continuing process. Therefore, before the beginning of each evaluation period, CMS will publish the performance criteria as a notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

[48 FR 7178, Feb. 18, 1983]

**§ 421.122 Performance standards.**

(a) *Development of standards.* In addition to the performance criteria (§ 421.120), CMS develops detailed performance standards for use in evaluating intermediary performance which may be based on historical performance, application of acceptable statistical measures of variation to nationwide intermediary experience during a base period, or changing program emphases or requirements. These standards are also developed considering intermediary experience and evaluate the specific requirements of each functional responsibility or criterion.

(b) *Factors beyond intermediary's control.* To identify measurable factors that significantly affect an intermediary's performance, but that are not within the intermediary's control, CMS will—

(1) Study the performance of intermediaries during the base period, and

(2) Consider the noncontrollable factors in developing performance standards.

(c) *Publication of standards.* The development and revision of standards for

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evaluating intermediary performance is a continuing process. Therefore, before the beginning of each evaluation period, which usually coincides with the Federal fiscal year period of October 1–September 30, CMS publishes the performance standards as part of the FEDERAL REGISTER notice describing the performance criteria issued under § 421.120(c). CMS may not necessarily publish the criteria and standards every year. CMS interprets the statutory phrase “before the beginning of each evaluation period” as allowing publication of the criteria and standards after the Federal fiscal year begins, as long as the evaluation period of the intermediaries for the new criteria and standards begins after the publication of the notice.

[59 FR 682, Jan. 6, 1994]

### § 421.124 Intermediary’s failure to perform efficiently and effectively.

(a) Failure by an intermediary to meet, or to demonstrate the capacity to meet, the criteria or standards specified in §§ 421.120 and 421.122 may be grounds for adverse action by the Secretary or by CMS, such as reassignment of providers, offer of a short-term agreement, termination of a contract, or non-renewal of a contract. If an intermediary meets all criteria and standards in its overall performance, but does not meet them with respect to a specific provider or class of providers, CMS may reassign that provider or class of providers to another intermediary in accordance with § 421.114.

(b) In addition, notwithstanding whether an intermediary meets the criteria and standards, if the cost incurred by the intermediary to meet its contractual requirements exceeds the amount which CMS finds to be reasonable and adequate to meet the cost which must be incurred by an efficiently and economically operated intermediary, those high costs may also be grounds for adverse action.

[59 FR 682, Jan. 6, 1994]

### § 421.126 Termination of agreements.

(a) *Termination by intermediary.* An intermediary may terminate its agreement at any time by—

(1) Giving written notice of its intention to CMS and to the providers it services at least 180 days before its intended termination date; and

(2) Giving public notice of its intention by publishing a statement of the effective date of termination at least 60 days before that date. Publication must be in a newspaper of general circulation in each community served by the intermediary.

(b) *Termination by the Secretary, and right of appeal.* (1) The Secretary may terminate an agreement if—

(i) The intermediary fails to comply with the requirements of this subpart;

(ii) The intermediary fails to meet the criteria or standards specified in §§ 421.120 and 421.122; or

(iii) CMS has reassigned, under § 421.114 or § 421.116, all of the providers assigned to the intermediary.

(2) If the Secretary decides to terminate an agreement, he or she will offer the intermediary an opportunity for a hearing, in accordance with § 421.128.

(3) If the intermediary does not request a hearing, or if the hearing decision affirms the Secretary’s decision, the Secretary will provide reasonable notice of the effective date of termination to—

(i) The intermediary;

(ii) The providers served by the intermediary; and

(iii) The general public.

(4) The providers served by the intermediary will be given the opportunity to nominate another intermediary, in accordance with § 421.104.

### § 421.128 Intermediary’s opportunity for hearing and right to judicial review.

(a) *Basis for appeal.* An intermediary adversely affected by any of the following actions shall be granted an opportunity for a hearing:

(1) Assignment or reassignment of providers to another intermediary.

(2) Designation of a national or regional intermediary to serve a class of providers.

(3) Termination of the agreement.

(b) *Request for hearing.* The intermediary shall file the request with CMS within 20 days from the date on the notice of intended action.