

(i) There is a delay by the intermediary in making payment to the inpatient rehabilitation facility.

(ii) Due to an exceptional situation, there is a temporary delay in the inpatient rehabilitation facility's preparation and submittal of bills to the intermediary beyond its normal billing cycle.

(2) *Approval of payment.* An inpatient rehabilitation facility's request for an accelerated payment must be approved by the intermediary and us.

(3) *Amount of payment.* The amount of the accelerated payment is computed as a percentage of the net payment for unbilled or unpaid covered services.

(4) *Recovery of payment.* Recovery of the accelerated payment is made by recoupment as inpatient rehabilitation facility bills are processed or by direct payment by the inpatient rehabilitation facility.

§ 412.634 Requirements under the Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility (IRF) Quality Reporting Program (QRP).

(a) *Participation.*(1) For the FY 2018 payment determination and subsequent years, an IRF must begin reporting data under the IRF QRP requirements no later than the first day of the calendar quarter subsequent to 30 days after the date on its CMS Certification Number (CCN) notification letter, which designates the IRF as operating in the CMS designated data submission system.

(2) [Reserved]

(b) *Submission requirements.* (1) IRFs must submit to CMS data on measures specified under sections 1886(j)(7)(D), 1899B(c)(1), 1899B(d)(1) of the Act, and standardized patient assessment data required under section 1899B(b)(1) of the Act, as applicable. Such data must be submitted in the form and manner, and at a time, specified by CMS.

(2) CMS may remove a quality measure from the IRF QRP based on one or more of the following factors:

(i) Measure performance among IRFs is so high and unvarying that meaningful distinctions in improvements in performance can no longer be made;

(ii) Performance or improvement on a measure does not result in better patient outcomes;

(iii) A measure does not align with current clinical guidelines or practice;

(iv) The availability of a more broadly applicable (across settings, populations, or conditions) measure for the particular topic;

(v) The availability of a measure that is more proximal in time to desired patient outcomes for the particular topic;

(vi) The availability of a measure that is more strongly associated with desired patient outcomes for the particular topic;

(vii) The collection or public reporting of a measure leads to negative unintended consequences other than patient harm;

(viii) The costs associated with a measure outweigh the benefit of its continued use in the program.

(c) *Exception and Extension Requirements.* (1) An IRF may request and CMS may grant exceptions or extensions to the measures data or standardized patient assessment data reporting requirements, for one or more quarters, when there are certain extraordinary circumstances beyond the control of the IRF.

(2) An IRF must request an exception or extension within 90 days of the date that the extraordinary circumstances occurred.

(3) Exception and extension requests must be submitted to CMS from the IRF by sending an email to IRFQRPreconsiderations@cms.hhs.gov containing all of the following information:

(i) IRF CMS Certification Number (CCN).

(ii) IRF Business Name.

(iii) IRF Business Address.

(iv) CEO or CEO-designated personnel contact information including name, telephone number, title, email address, and mailing address. (The address must be a physical address, not a post office box.)

(v) IRF's reason for requesting the exception or extension.

(vi) Evidence of the impact of extraordinary circumstances, including, but not limited to, photographs, newspaper, and other media articles.

(vii) Date when the IRF believes it will be able to again submit IRF QRP data and a justification for the proposed date.

(4) CMS may grant exceptions or extensions to IRFs without a request if it is determined that one or more of the following has occurred:

(i) An extraordinary circumstance affects an entire region or locale.

(ii) A systemic problem with one of CMS's data collection systems directly affected the ability of an IRF to submit data.

(5) Email is the only form of submission that will be accepted. Any reconsideration requests received through another channel will not be considered as a valid exception or extension request.

(d) *Reconsideration.* (1) IRFs that do not meet the requirement in paragraph (b) of this section for a program year will receive a written notification of non-compliance through at least one of the following methods: The CMS designated data submission system, the United States Postal Service, or via an email from the Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC).

(2) Reconsideration requests must be submitted to CMS by sending an email to IRFQRPReconsiderations@cms.hhs.gov containing all of the following information:

(i) IRF CCN.

(ii) IRF Business Name.

(iii) IRF Business Address.

(iv) CEO or CEO-designated personnel contact information including name, telephone number, title, email address, and mailing address. (The address must be a physical address, not a post office box.)

(v) CMS identified reason(s) for non-compliance from the non-compliance letter.

(vi) Reason(s) for requesting reconsideration.

(3) The request for reconsideration must be accompanied by supporting documentation demonstrating compliance. This documentation must be submitted electronically as an attachment to the reconsideration request email. Any request for reconsideration that does not contain sufficient evidence of

compliance with the IRF QRP requirements will be denied.

(4) Email is the only form of submission that will be accepted. Any reconsideration requests received through another channel will not be considered as a valid exception or extension request.

(5) CMS will notify IRFs, in writing, of its final decision regarding any reconsideration request through at least one of the following methods: CMS designated data submission system, the United States Postal Service, or via an email from the Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC).

(e) *Appeals.* (1) An IRF may appeal the decision made by CMS on its reconsideration request by filing with the Provider Reimbursement Review Board (PRRB) under 42 CFR part 405, subpart R.

(2) [Reserved]

(f) *Data Completion Thresholds.* (1) IRFs must meet or exceed two separate data completeness thresholds: One threshold set at 95 percent for completion of required quality measures data and standardized patient assessment data collected using the IRF-PAI submitted through the CMS designated data submission system; and a second threshold set at 100 percent for measures data collected and submitted using the CDC NHSN.

(2) These thresholds (95 percent for completion of required quality measures data and standardized patient assessment data on the IRF-PAI; 100 percent for CDC NHSN data) will apply to all measures and standardized patient assessment data requirements adopted into the IRF QRP.

(3) An IRF must meet or exceed both thresholds to avoid receiving a 2 percentage point reduction to their annual payment update for a given fiscal year, beginning with FY 2016 and for all subsequent payment updates.

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