

As the Administration prepares for the Diplomatic Conference, we invite interested parties to submit written comments on the Chairman's text of the draft treaties. These comments should be received by the PTO no later than November 22, 1996.

In addition, to facilitate a better understanding of the text of the draft treaties, the PTO will hold a briefing to discuss them. During the briefing, Jukka Liedes, Chairman of the Committee of Experts, will discuss the text and will be available to answer questions.

Copies of the draft treaties and other information relevant to the Diplomatic Conference can be found at the PTO's home page, located at www.uspto.gov. Copies of the draft treaties will also be available at the briefing and upon request.

Dated: October 10, 1996.

Bruce A. Lehman,

*Assistant Secretary of Commerce and
Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks.*

[FR Doc. 96-26511 Filed 10-16-96; 8:45 am]

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CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION

Sunshine Act Meeting

TIME AND DATE: Wednesday, October 23, 1996, 10:30 a.m.

LOCATION: Room 420, East West Towers, 4330 East West Highway, Bethesda, Maryland.

STATUS: Open to the Public.

MATTER TO BE CONSIDERED:

FY 1997 Operating Plan

The staff will brief the Commission on issues related to the Commission's Operating Plan for Fiscal Year 1997.

For a recorded message containing the latest agenda information, call (301) 504-0709.

CONTACT PERSON FOR ADDITIONAL

INFORMATION: Sadye E. Dunn, Office of the Secretary, 4330 East West Highway, Bethesda, MD 20207 (301) 504-0800.

Dated: October 15, 1996.

Sadye E. Dunn,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-26826 Filed 10-15-96; 2:46 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of the Secretary

Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS); FY97 DRG Updates

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary, DoD.

ACTION: Notice of DRG revised rates.

SUMMARY: This notice provides the updated adjusted standardized amounts, DRG relative weights, outlier thresholds, and beneficiary cost-share per diem rates to be used for FY 1997 under the CHAMPUS DRG-based payment system. It also describes the changes made to the CHAMPUS DRG-based payment system in order to conform to changes made to the Medicare Prospective Payment System (PPS).

EFFECTIVE DATES: The rates and weights and Medicare PPS changes which affect the CHAMPUS DRG-based payment system contained in this notice are effective for admissions occurring on or after October 1, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Office of the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (OCHAMPUS), Program Development Branch, Aurora, CO 80045-6900.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Marty Maxey, program Development Branch, OCHAMPUS, telephone (303) 361-1227. To obtain copies of this document, see the **ADDRESSES** section above. Questions regarding payment of specific claims under the CHAMPUS DRG-based payment system should be addressed to the appropriate CHAMPUS contractor.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The final rule published on September 1, 1987 (52 FR 32992) set forth the basic procedures used under the CHAMPUS DRG-based payment system. This was subsequently amended by final rules published August 31, 1988 (53 FR 33461), October 21, 1988 (53 FR 41331), December 16, 1988 (53 FR 50515), May 30, 1990 (55 FR 21863), and October 22, 1990 (55 FR 42560).

An explicit tenet of these final rules, and one based on the statute authorizing the use of DRGs by CHAMPUS, is that the CHAMPUS DRG-based payment system is modeled on the Medicare PPS, and that, whenever practicable, the CHAMPUS system will follow the same rules that apply to the Medicare PPS. HCFA publishes these changes annually in the Federal Register and discusses in detail the impact of the changes.

In addition, this notice updates the rates and weights in accordance with our previous final rules. The actual changes we are making, along with a

description of their relationship to the Medicare PPS, are detailed below.

I. Medicare PPS Changes Which Affect the CHAMPUS DRG-Based Payment System

Following is a discussion of the changes the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) has made to the Medicare PPS which affect the CHAMPUS DRG-based payment system.

A. DRG Classifications

Under both the Medicare PPS and the CHAMPUS DRG-based payment system, cases are classified into the appropriate DRG by a Grouper program. The Grouper classifies each case into a DRG on the basis of the diagnosis and procedure codes and demographic information (that is, sex, age, and discharge status). The Grouper used for the CHAMPUS DRG-based payment system is the same as the current Medicare Grouper with two modifications. The CHAMPUS system has replaced Medicare DRG 435 with two age-based DRGs (900 and 901), and we have implemented thirty-four (34) neonatal DRGs in place of Medicare DRGs 385 through 390. For admissions occurring on or after October 1, 1995, the CHAMPUS grouper hierarchy logic was changed so the age split (age <29 days) and assignments to MDC 15 occur before assignment of the PreMDC DRGs. This results in all neonate tracheostomies and organ transplants to be grouped to MDC 15 DRGs and not to DRGs 480-483 or 495. Grouping for all other DRGs under the CHAMPUS system is identical to the Medicare PPS.

For FY 1997, HCFA will implement a number of classification changes, including surgical hierarchy changes, revisions to the Major Problem Diagnosis List, and refinements to the Complications and Comorbidities (CC) List. The CHAMPUS Grouper will incorporate all changes made to the Medicare Grouper.

B. Wage Index and Medicare Geographic Classification Review Board Guidelines

CHAMPUS will continue to use the same wage index amounts used for the Medicare PPS. In addition, CHAMPUS will duplicate all changes with regard to the wage index for specific hospitals which are redesignated by the Medicare Geographic Classification Review Board.

C. Hospital Market Basket

We will update the adjusted standardized amounts according to the final update hospital market basket used for the Medicare PPS according to HCFA's August 30, 1996, final rule.