

Dated: October 19, 1999.

John Parmigiani,

HCFA Reports Clearance Officer, HCFA Office of Information Services, Security and Standards Group, Division of HCFA Enterprise Standards.

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Health Care Financing Administration

[HCFA-3026-N]

Medicare Program; Open Town Hall Meeting To Discuss Transplant Center Criteria

AGENCY: Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), HHS.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice announces a meeting to convene all parties interested in providing input to our Medicare coverage policy pertaining to criteria for approving organ transplant facilities. This meeting represents one aspect of the evolving process for making the coverage reviews more open and responsive to the public.

DATES: The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 1, 1999 from 8:30 a.m. until 5 p.m., eastern standard time.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held in the Health Care Financing Administration Main Auditorium, 7500 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, Maryland 21244.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jacqueline Sheridan, (410) 786-4635.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Medicare currently covers heart, liver, and lung transplants only in facilities that meet the following specified criteria, which are similar for the three organ types: Patient selection criteria, patient management protocols, commitment of resources and planning, facility resources, experience and survival, agreement to maintain data, agreement with organ procurement organizations, and laboratory services. (We published three notices in the **Federal Register** related to our criteria for Medicare coverage of heart, liver, and lung transplants, respectively, as follows: April 6, 1987 (52 FR 10935); April 12, 1991 (56 FR 15006); and February 2, 1995 (60 FR 6537).) These criteria have been in place for many years and need to be reevaluated because of advancements in the area of organ transplants.

The purpose of the Town Hall meeting is to convene dialogue on criteria for Medicare coverage of facilities to perform organ transplants, including the possibility of additional rulemaking. Discussion of other controversial transplant-related issues, such as organ allocation policies, organ donation policies, or standards for organ procurement organizations, will not be permitted at this meeting due to time constraints. We anticipate attendance by national professional medical organizations; staff of hospitals that currently perform transplants; experts in technology assessment, health policy, and clinical research; other Federal agencies; managed care organizations; transplant recipients and their families; and other members of the public with an interest in transplants.

The format for the meeting will be four subject-related panel presentations followed by an opportunity for comments from the audience. The panel topics will include (1) aspects of center performance that should be considered in determining coverage; (2) methodology for outcome measures; (3) data; and (4) target thresholds. It is our intent for invited panelists to stimulate further discussion based on the presentations. This discussion will be free-flowing and will not result in consensus statements or a set of advisory recommendations.

The meeting is open to the public, but attendance is limited to space available. We encourage individuals to register early to secure availability and allow time for receipt of background materials. Individuals must register in advance as described below.

Registration

Casals and Associates, Incorporated in Alexandria, Virginia will handle registration for the meeting. Individuals may register by contacting Alison Holder at Casals and Associates, Incorporated by FAX at (703) 920-5750, or by mail at Casals and Associates, Incorporated, 1199 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314. Registrants must provide their name, title, firm name, address, telephone number, FAX number, and Internet electronic mail address (if applicable).

Casals and Associates, Incorporated will provide all registrants with a confirmation packet and background papers before the meeting.

Participants who wish to display an exhibit or make a presentation at the meeting must contact Connie Conrad at (410) 786-4631 or via e-mail at cconrad@hcfa.gov, or Jacqueline Sheridan at (410) 786-4635 or via e-mail

at jsheridan@hcfa.gov, no later than November 15, 1999.

We will accept written questions, comments, or other materials from individuals or individual organizations either before the meeting, or up to 14 days after the meeting. Individuals who wish to submit comments must do so by mail to the Health Care Financing Administration, Attention: Jacqueline Sheridan, Office of Clinical Standards and Quality/CAG, Room S3-02-01, 7500 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, Maryland 21244-1850; or by FAX at (410) 786-9286; or by e-mail at jsheridan@hcfa.gov.

There is no special format for the materials; however, we request that commenters be clear about the issue or aspect of the proposed process on which they have a question, comment, or suggestion.

Individuals may access information regarding the agenda and schedule of presentations on our home page (www.hcfa.gov/quality/8b.htm).

Authority: Secs. 1102 and 1871 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1302 and 1395hh).

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program No. 93.773, Medicare—Hospital Insurance; and Program No. 93.774, Medicare—Supplementary Medical Insurance)

Dated: October 13, 1999.

Michael M. Hash,

Deputy Administrator, Health Care Financing Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Office of Inspector General

Draft OIG Compliance Program Guidance for Nursing Facilities

AGENCY: Office of Inspector General (OIG), HHS.

ACTION: Notice and comment period.

SUMMARY: This **Federal Register** notice seeks the comments of interested parties on draft compliance guidance developed by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) for nursing facilities. Through this notice, the OIG is setting forth its general views on the value and fundamental principles of nursing facilities' compliance programs, and the specific elements that nursing facilities should consider when developing and implementing an effective compliance program.

DATE: To assure consideration, comments must be delivered to the