DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

42 CFR Part 410

[CMS–1717–F3]

RIN—0938–AT74

Medicare Program: Changes to Hospital Outpatient Prospective Payment and Ambulatory Surgical Center Payment Systems and Quality Reporting Programs; Revisions of Organ Procurement Organizations Conditions of Coverage; Prior Authorization Process and Requirements for Certain Covered Outpatient Department Services; Potential Changes to the Laboratory Date of Service Policy; Changes to Grandfathered Children's Hospitals-Within-Hospitals; Notice of Closure of Two Teaching Hospitals and Opportunity To Apply for Available Slots; Correcting Amendment

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

ACTION: Correcting amendment.

SUMMARY: In the November 12, 2019 issue of the Federal Register, we published a final rule with comment period that made changes to the conditions for therapeutic outpatient hospital or CAH services and supplies incident to a physician’s or nonphysician practitioner’s service. This correcting amendment corrects a technical error in the regulations resulting from an error in that final rule with comment period.

DATES: This correcting amendment is effective February 14, 2020 and is applicable beginning January 1, 2020.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Supervision of Outpatient Therapeutic Services in Hospitals and CAHs, contact Josh McFeeters via email at Joshua.McFeeters@cms.hhs.gov or at (410) 786–9732.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

In FR Doc. 2019–24138 of November 12, 2019 (84 FR 61142), “Medicare Program: Changes to Hospital Outpatient Prospective Payment and Ambulatory Surgical Center Payment Systems and Quality Reporting Programs; Revisions of Organ Procurement Organizations Conditions of Coverage; Prior Authorization Process and Requirements for Certain Covered Outpatient Department Services; Potential Changes to the Laboratory Date
of Service Policy; Changes to Grandfathered Children’s Hospitals-Within-Hospitals; Notice of Closure of Two Teaching Hospitals and Opportunity to Apply for Available Slots” (hereinafter referred to as the CY 2020 OPPS/ASC final rule with comment period), there was a technical error in the regulations text that is identified and corrected in this correcting amendment. The provisions of this correcting amendment are treated as if the technical error in the regulations text at § 410.27 that resulted from the error in the document published November 12, 2019 had not occurred. Accordingly, the corrections are applicable beginning January 1, 2020.

II. Summary of Error in the Regulations Text

On page 61490 of the CY 2020 OPPS/ASC final rule with comment period, we made a technical error in an amending instruction which resulted in the unintended removal of paragraphs (a)(1)(iv)(C), (D), and (E) from § 410.27 of the CFR. Accordingly, we are amending § 410.27 to accurately reflect the intent as described in the preamble language included in the CY 2020 OPPS/ASC final rule with comment period (84 FR 61359 through 61363), but which was not properly reflected in the regulatory text portion of the rule. In the amending instruction, we stated that "§ 410.27 is amended by revising paragraph (a)(1)(iv).” The amending instruction should have read "§ 410.27 is amended by revising paragraphs (a)(1)(iv) introductory text, (a)(1)(iv)(A), and (B)." This error in the amending instruction resulted in § 410.27(a)(1)(iv)(C) through (E) being erroneously removed. Therefore, this correcting amendment corrects this error by adding paragraphs (a)(1)(iv)(C), (D), and (E).

III. Waiver of Proposed Rulemaking and Delay in Effective Date

Under 5 U.S.C. 553(b) of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), the agency is required to publish a notice of the proposed rule in the Federal Register before the provisions of a rule take effect. Similarly, section 1871(b)(1) of the Act requires the Secretary to provide for notice of the proposed rule in the Federal Register and provide a period of no less than 60 days for public comment. In addition, section 553(d) of the APA, and section 1871(e)(1)(B)(i) mandate a 30-day delay in effective date after issuance or publication of a rule. Sections 553(b)(B) and 553(d)(3) of the APA provide for exceptions from the notice and comment and delay in effective date APA requirements; in cases in which these exceptions apply, sections 1871(b)(2)(C) and 1871(e)(1)(B)(ii) of the Act provide exceptions from the notice and 60-day comment period and delay in effective date requirements of the Act as well. Section 553(b)(B) of the APA and section 1871(b)(2)(C) of the Act authorize an agency to dispense with normal rulemaking requirements for good cause if the agency makes a finding that the notice and comment process are impracticable, unnecessary, or contrary to the public interest. In addition, both section 553(d)(3) of the APA and section 1871(e)(1)(B)(ii) of the Act allow the agency to avoid the 30-day delay in effective date where such delay is contrary to the public interest and an agency includes a statement of support.

We believe that this correcting amendment does not constitute a rulemaking that would be subject to these requirements. This correcting amendment corrects a technical error in the regulations text included in the CY 2020 OPPS/ASC final rule with comment period but does not make substantive changes to the policies that were adopted in the final rule with comment period. As a result, the corrections made through this correcting amendment are intended to ensure that the information in the CY 2020 OPPS/ASC final rule with comment period accurately reflects the policies adopted.

In addition, even if this were a rulemaking to which the notice and comment procedures and delayed effective date requirements applied, we find that there is good cause to waive such requirements. Undertaking further notice and comment procedures to incorporate the corrections in this document into the final rule with comment period or delaying the effective date would be contrary to the public interest because it is in the public’s interest to ensure that the CY 2020 OPPS/ASC final rule with comment period accurately reflects the policies adopted.

Furthermore, such procedures would be unnecessary, as we are not altering our policies, but rather, we are simply correcting implementing the policies that we previously proposed, received comment on, and subsequently finalized. This correcting amendment is intended solely to ensure that the CY 2020 OPPS/ASC final rule with comment period accurately reflects our policies as of the date they take effect and are applicable.

List of Subjects in 42 CFR Part 410

Diseases, Health facilities, Health professions, Laboratories, Medicare, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Rural areas, X-rays.

Accordingly, 42 CFR chapter IV is corrected by making the following correcting amendment:

PART 410—SUPPLEMENTARY MEDICAL INSURANCE (SMI) BENEFITS

1. The authority citation for part 410 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 1302, 1395m, 1395hh, 1395rr, and 1395ddd.

2. Section 410.27 is amended by adding paragraphs (a)(1)(iv)(C), (D), and (E) to read as follows:

§ 410.27 Therapeutic outpatient hospital or CAH services and supplies incident to a physician’s or nonphysician practitioner’s service: Conditions.

* * * * * *(a) * * *(1) * * *(iv) * * *

§ 410.47 CAH services and supplies incident to a physician’s or nonphysician practitioner’s service: Conditions.

* * * * * *(a) * * *(1) * * *(iv) * * *

* * * * * *(a) * * *(1) * * *(iv) * * *

§ 410.77 Therapeutic services included in the regulations text that are incorporated by reference in the regulations text included in the CY 2020 OPPS/ASC final rule with comment period and delay in effective date requirements applied, we find that there is good cause to waive such requirements. Undertaking further notice and comment procedures to incorporate the corrections in this document into the final rule with comment period or delaying the effective date would be contrary to the public interest because it is in the public’s interest to ensure that the CY 2020 OPPS/ASC final rule with comment period accurately reflects the policies adopted.

Furthermore, such procedures would be unnecessary, as we are not altering our policies, but rather, we are simply correctly implementing the policies that we previously proposed, received comment on, and subsequently finalized. This correcting amendment is intended solely to ensure that the CY 2020 OPPS/ASC final rule with comment period accurately reflects our policies as of the date they take effect and are applicable.

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that the remainder of the service can be delivered safely under general supervision; and


Ann C. Agnew,
Executive Secretary to the Department, Department of Health and Human Services.

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BILLING CODE 4120–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No.: 200206–0048]

RIN 0648–BJ07

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; IFQ Program; Modify Medical and Beneficiary Transfer Provisions

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: NMFS issues regulations to modify the medical and beneficiary transfer provisions of the Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program for the fixed-gear commercial Pacific halibut and sablefish fisheries. This final rule is intended to simplify administration of the medical and beneficiary transfer provisions while promoting the long-standing objective of maintaining an owner-operated IFQ fishery. This final rule makes minor technical corrections to regulations for improved accuracy and clarity. This final rule is intended to promote the goals and objectives of the IFQ Program, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the Northern Pacific Halibut Act of 1982, and other applicable laws.

DATES: This final rule is effective on March 16, 2020.

ADDRESSES: Electronic copies of the Regulatory Impact Review (referred to as the “Analysis”) and the Categorical Exclusion prepared for this final rule may be obtained from https://www.regulations.gov or from the NMFS Alaska Region website at https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/region/alaska.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Stephanie Warpinski, 907–586–7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NMFS published the proposed rule in the Federal Register on October 24, 2019 (84 FR 56998) with public comments invited through November 25, 2019. The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) recommended this final rule, which clarifies the administration of the IFQ Program medical transfer and beneficiary transfer provisions. These changes benefit IFQ Program participants, their beneficiaries, and NMFS by providing clear standards, reducing potential inconsistencies with other definitions used for other state or Federal programs, and reducing administrative costs and burdens associated with existing regulatory provisions.

The following background sections describe (1) the IFQ Program, (2) the IFQ medical transfer provision, (3) the IFQ beneficiary transfer provision, and (4) the appeals process. Additional detail is provided in the preamble to the proposed rule (84 FR 56998, October 24, 2019).

Background

The IFQ Program

The commercial halibut and sablefish fisheries in the GOA and the BSAI management areas are managed under the IFQ Program that was implemented in 1995 (58 FR 59375, November 9, 1993). The Council and NMFS developed the IFQ Program to resolve the conservation and management problems commonly associated with open access fisheries. The preamble to the proposed rule published on December 3, 1992 (57 FR 57130), describes the background issues leading to the Council’s initial action recommending the adoption of the IFQ Program. Section 2.2 of the Analysis and the preamble of the proposed rule (see ADDRESSES) provide additional information on the sablefish and halibut IFQ Program.

The Council and NMFS created the provisions of the IFQ Program to support the conservation and management objectives of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and the Halibut Act while retaining the “owner-operator” character of the fishing fleets as much as possible.

Medical Transfer Provision

The IFQ Program includes a medical transfer provision that allows quota share (QS) holders of catcher vessel QS (referred to as class B, C, and D QS shares) who are not otherwise eligible to use a hired master to temporarily transfer (lease) their annual IFQ to another individual if the QS holder or an immediate family member has a temporary medical condition that precludes the QS holder from fishing (72 FR 44795, August 9, 2007). This provision allows QS holders with a temporary medical condition, or caring for an immediate family member with a medical condition, that would preclude the QS holder from fishing during a season, to transfer their annual IQF to another qualified individual. In recommending this medical transfer provision, the Council and NMFS balanced the objective to limit long-term leasing of QS to promote an owner-onboard fishery with its recognition that a medical transfer provision would provide a mechanism for QS holders to retain their QS during bona fide medical hardships.

Prior to implementation of this provision in 2007, a QS holder with a medical condition was required to divest his or her QS or allow the IFQ to go unfished during years he or she could not be on board the vessel. Medical transfers were not intended to be a mechanism for persons unable or unwilling to participate in the fishery as an owner onboard to continue to receive economic benefits from their QS holdings, but were intended to address legitimate medical conditions that precluded participation (72 FR 44795, August 9, 2007).

To limit potential for repeated, long-term, or illegitimate use of the medical transfer provision, the current provisions: (1) Apply only to individuals who are not otherwise eligible to use hired masters; (2) apply only to IFQ derived from catcher vessel QS held by the applicant; (3) require certification by specific types of medical providers who must describe the condition (and the care required if caring for an immediate family member); (4) require verification of the inability of the QS holder to participate in IFQ fisheries; and (5) contain a use cap of two years in a five-year period.

Beneficiary Transfer Provision

In 1996, NMFS amended the IFQ Program regulations to allow for a temporary transfer of QS to surviving spouses of deceased QS holders (61 FR 41523, August 9, 1996). In 2000, a final rule (65 FR 78126, December 14, 2000) expanded the existing survivorship transfer provisions in 50 CFR 679.41(k) to include an immediate family member designated as a beneficiary to whom the survivorship transfer privileges would extend in the absence of a surviving spouse. This transfer is intended to benefit the surviving spouse, or an immediate family member designated by the QS holder, for a limited period of time.