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— American Medical News —

American Medical News Oct. 4, 2010

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TOP STORIES

Insurers drop child-only coverage on eve of health reform mandates

As preexisting condition rules kick in for children, health plans stop selling such policies in most markets, casting doubt on their reform pledges.

Doctors, patients use smartphones, but can't make mobile connection

A study cites a lack of payment from insurers to physicians for electronic monitoring and an unwillingness among patients to pay for that service.

GOVERNMENT & MEDICINE

Medicaid panel to study access to care, quality

Physician pay, eligibility policies and alternatives to medical liability also are on the new commission's "overwhelming agenda."

Medicare Advantage premiums to dip an average of 1%

CMS expects that enrollment in the plans will grow by 5% in 2011, but critics say the health reform law eventually will harm beneficiaries.

Public health measures headed to House with bipartisan nods

But a committee votes along party lines to reject a GOP resolution calling for Obama administration records on the cost of reform.

Medical devices bidding program gets passing grade

The Government Accountability Office says positive changes have been made since a series of problems forced a shutdown of the process in 2008.

AMA: Insurer appeals rule must protect medical role

Health insurance industry groups counter that some of the proposed regulations are burdensome and could slow the appeals process.

Tougher health fraud prevention measures proposed

FROM RECENT NEWS

Health reform questions
Your patients will ask, here are some answers

Advocate for unity
Incoming AMA president

Health IT to-do list
Timetable for maintenance and security tasks

Doctors' offices and medical suppliers would face new screening procedures and payment penalties under the CMS rule.

PROFESSIONAL ISSUES

New tactics for diversity: Creating doctors from all racial, ethnic groups

Medical school efforts to attract more minorities have been hindered by myriad factors, including a small pool of applicants and socioeconomic barriers.

Doctors use Formula One pit crews as safety model

Hospitals are learning to translate the timing and synchronization of auto racing teams to the handoffs of patients from surgery to recovery.

Medical education still evolving 100 years after Flexner report

Today's medical schools are focusing on patient safety and community-based care, and students are getting earlier exposure to clinical medicine.

Cash-strapped states target residency programs for cuts

Academic health centers nationwide are scrambling to reduce costs or find new funding sources to maintain graduate medical education.

In the Courts - Negative online reviews leave doctors with little recourse

OPINION

Editorial - Proposed tax break for lawyers would worsen liability mess

The AMA and other medical organizations say allowing attorneys to deduct expenses in certain liability cases would encourage lawyers to file more lawsuits.

AMA Leader Commentary - "Office Hours" gives doctors a chance to stay connected

Letters - If EMRs were so useful, incentives and penalties would not be needed and others

BUSINESS

Narrow networks: Will you be in or out?

Taking the tiers out of tiered networks, insurers are setting up plans that include certain physicians but leave out ones they consider low-ranked doctors.

Consumers look to insurers to lower health care costs

One analyst calls it "funny and surprising" that insurance companies are expected to help policyholders wade through the health system reform law.

2010 could end up as worst year for hospital layoffs

Increased demand for charity care, fewer elective procedures and reductions in payments from government programs are blamed.

Small hospitals less ready for "meaningful use" mandate

A survey finds that only 28% of the 152 hospitals responding expect to qualify for stimulus funds in the first six months of 2011.

Incentive plans playing bigger role in physician earnings

More and more medical practices base at least some compensation on patient satisfaction, readmissions, clinical outcomes and other performance metrics.

Britain scraps top-down plan for health data network

Under a new program, physicians and hospitals will be able to use existing IT systems or implement ones of their choosing.

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