

Health System Reform INSIGHT



Feb. 10, 2011

Given the new direction for the nation's health system, the AMA has developed *Health System Reform Insight* to help you understand the Affordable Care Act and what it means to you and your patients.

ACA expands role of panel reviewing Medicaid and CHIP

One of the key components in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) for expanding health care coverage to the uninsured is the Medicaid program. However, as both patients and physicians know, expansion of health care coverage does not necessarily mean access to care, especially in light of Medicaid's historically low reimbursement levels and administrative hassles. Therefore, the ACA also expanded and funded the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC), which was originally established in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Reauthorization Act of 2009.

MACPAC is tasked with reviewing state and federal Medicaid and CHIP access and payment policies and making nonpartisan recommendations to Congress, the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the states on a wide range of issues affecting Medicaid and CHIP populations, including health system reform and improving access, payment and quality of care in Medicaid and CHIP. Among its duties, MACPAC is required to do the following:

- Review and make recommendations on payment policies and their relationship to access and quality of care for beneficiaries; eligibility policies as well as enrollment and retention processes; coverage policies; quality of care;



Feb. 16

Attend "Pathways to success: What physicians need to know about ACOs and the coming revolution in payment practices," an [AMA seminar](#) being held from 4 to 8:30 p.m. Pacific time at the Oregon Medical Education Foundation Conference Center in Portland, Ore.



[Letter from AMA, 100 medical and physician organizations in support of HEALTH Act](#)

[Advocating for improvements to the Affordable Care Act](#)

[Medicare physician payment rates for 2011](#)

[AMA comments on ACA implementation regulations](#)

[Investments in disease prevention and wellness initiatives under the Affordable Care Act](#)

[New HHS Web portal to help consumers buy health insurance](#)

interactions with Medicare and Medicaid—such as for dual eligibles and disabled children—including consultation with the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission and other policies related to preventive, acute and long-term services and supports

- Submit reports to Congress on March 15 and June 15 of each year
- Review and submit reports and/or comments on secretarial reports and regulations that relate to access policies under Medicaid and CHIP, as well as national and state-specific Medicaid and CHIP data
- Create an early warning system to identify provider shortage areas and other factors that adversely affect access to care or health status of beneficiaries
- Report by 2016 on alternatives to current tort litigation and determine the impact on Medicaid and CHIP programs

Comprised of 17 commissioners appointed by the Comptroller General, MACPAC is chaired by Diane Rowland and co-chaired by David Sundwall, MD. Its staff includes an executive director, Lu Zawistowich, and policy experts and analysts with expertise in federal and state Medicaid/CHIP programs.

MACPAC's areas of research and analysis include evaluating and monitoring access to care in both programs; Medicaid payment systems, including looking at the link between Medicaid payment systems and access; managed care, especially for the disabled, the mentally ill and other special populations; enrollment, eligibility and benefits; data collection and use for program accountability and policy analysis; and dual eligibles.

MACPAC has held four meetings to date, and its next meeting is scheduled for Feb. 25. The AMA has been monitoring the commission meetings and will provide input to the commission as appropriate.

Visit the [MACPAC website](#) for more information.

Help shape the AMA's

[Pathways for physician success under health care payment and delivery reforms](#) 

[How reform law integrity provisions impact your practice](#) 

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advocacy efforts

What governmental rules and regulations are most burdensome to your practice? Tell the AMA by participating in a [short survey](#), which will help inform AMA advocacy on your behalf. Also, learn more about the [AMA's federal regulatory advocacy efforts](#).

Feedback

If you have specific comments on this edition of *Health System Reform Insight* simply reply to this message. For more general feedback on *Health System Reform Insight*, send an e-mail to hsr@ama-assn.org to alert the editor of your comments and concerns.

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