



CMS touts findings from quality demos

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CMS officials on Thursday announced findings from a trio of demonstration projects that they say show “strong evidence” that paying incentives for improved patient care increases quality and reduces the growth in Medicare outlays. The demonstration projects include the Hospital Quality Incentive Demonstration (HQID) program, the Physician Group Practice (PGP) demo and the Medicare Care Management Performance (MCMP) project. CMS trumpeted the findings of the three demos, which have netted hospitals and large and small physician practices millions in bonus payments.

The 10 PGP demo participants met “benchmark performance” for 29 of the 32 quality measures and three of the participants – Geisinger Clinic of Danville, PA; Marshfield (WI) Clinic; and St. Louis Park, MN-based Park Nicollet Health Services – achieved the benchmarks for all 32 measures.

More than 500 small and solo practices that participated in the MCMP will receive \$9.5 million in incentive payments for their performance on 26 quality measures, with the average payment worth \$18,100. On the high end, some practices earned up to \$62,500 in bonus payments, CMS said.

In the HQID project, CMS will pay out \$12 million to 212 top-performing hospitals in year five of the demonstration. The demo has netted \$48 million to participating hospitals, CMS said.

CMS Administrator Don Berwick hailed the findings of the demos as “good news for all Americans,” but suggested it is “just a start.”

“Based on what we have learned so far, we know the health care industry can meet high standards for improving quality of care while saving Medicare money,” he said.

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