

Evaluation of the Medicare Care Management Performance Demonstration

Section 649 of the Medicare Modernization Act, which authorized the Medicare Care Management Performance Demonstration, requires that, no later than 12 months after the completion of the demonstration program, the Secretary shall submit a report to Congress on the demonstration along with recommendations for legislation and administrative action as appropriate. To fulfill this requirement and the legislative requirement for an evaluation of physicians' performance under the demonstration program, CMS and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality contracted with Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. to conduct an independent evaluation of the demonstration.

A non-randomized, matched comparison group of small- to medium-size physician practices will be used for the evaluation. The comparison practices will be selected from participating DOQ-IT practices in states other than the four participating in the MCMP demonstration. The comparison and demonstration practices will be matched on specific criteria, such as practice size, experience with EHRs, and pre-enrollment outcome measures, including patient hospitalizations and Medicare expenditures. The primary difference between the practices will be that the demonstration practices will receive a financial incentive for meeting clinical performance standards whereas the comparison practices will not.

Using Medicare claims data and results from patient and physician surveys, the demonstration and comparison practices will be compared to assess the effects of the financial incentive for performance improvement on continuity of care, health outcomes, quality of care, patient satisfaction with care, physician satisfaction, and Medicare expenditures. An office system survey, to be collected by the QIOs, will be used to compare the demonstration and comparison practices to explore the effect of the demonstration on progressive implementation and use of various aspects of EHRs. An implementation analysis, using information from site visits to the demonstration practices, will look at the experiences of the demonstration practices in implementing and using an EHR, identify barriers and facilitators to the adoption and use of an EHR, and include physicians' perception about the effects of the demonstration on their practice and patients. The evaluation will also explore whether there were any changes or improvement over time in practice performance and which practice characteristics are associated with improved health outcomes. The evaluation will run for four years.