

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services  
Questions and Answers:  
Home Health, Hospice and DME Open Door Forum  
Wednesday, July 12, 2023

1. Question: I would like to know if you could define what it means to be up to date on COVID-19 vaccination for a patient please.
  - a. Answer: We base our up-to-date definition on the CDC guidelines. And usually refer providers to the CDC website and their guidelines for the webpage.
2. Question: I was wondering if anybody brought up in Home Health proposed rule there was some rulemaking around a Hospice Special Focus Program.
  - a. Answer: That is correct.
3. Question: I just came across MLN and fact sheet. That states enhanced oversight for a new hospice in Arizona, California, Nevada, and Texas. I don't believe it has actually been published in one of those weekly newsletters yet. So, if someone was able to find it and send it over to me? Could you provide more color around this? I have noticed you will notify the letter to the address on file in PECOS. How do you determine the duration of the enhanced oversight? I noticed it can be anywhere between 30 days and a year. Where is the guideline on the duration of that?
  - a. Answer: The MLN was shared in the MLN Connects Newsletter on July 13, 2023 (attached). Due to program integrity concerns, no details will be shared beyond what is in the Medicare Learning Network (MLN) fact sheet. The MLN publishes free educational materials for health care providers on CMS programs, policies, and initiatives. The fact sheet contains CMS' publicly released information on the hospice provisional period of enhanced oversight.
4. Question: If someone could please explain why CMS is concerned about access to a Home Health Aide Service for beneficiaries to include an analysis of their reimbursement to those workers, yet staffing challenges and costs are the same are not considered or were not considered when developing the proposed rule, which imposes significant cuts to Home Health.
  - a. Answer: It basically stems from a handful of anecdotal reports that we have received from the agency. As you know, outside entities and associations. In addition to some OIG reports that I think I recall, fairly recently, that you know have focused on. We understand limitations and staffing issues, and those are things we are gleaning responses, and if there is a story behind that, I think we

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are maybe not privy to. So that is where we are putting that out there for public consumption and comments.

5. Question: in May, CMS announced that effective immediately, seat elevators were going to be covered as an accessory on power wheelchairs. Are there any further updates regarding that? We have had a limited amount of information since the initial announcement. Are there updates on the progress of that as far as coverage or things like that?
  - a. Answer: CMS released information about HCPCS coding and pricing for power seat elevation equipment on [CMS.gov](https://www.cms.gov). It's at the below link, and it includes information on coding and pricing. <https://www.cms.gov/center/provider-type/durable-medical-equipment-dme-center>
6. Question: I have a question regarding discharge, the functional discharge score, could you speak more to how that will be calculated, and regard GG items, can you spend on that a little bit more.
  - a. Answer and question back: Because it is directly related to the proposed rule. I am not able to give that much detail in reference to calculation. But if you phrase your question and send it to the Home Health Quality questions mailbox, we will be able to update you with, I guess, kind of like the specs. Is that what you mean? How do we get to the number itself?
    - i. Answer: Maybe not the exact specs, more or less. Is it looking at the GG items at the start of care and then comparing them to the GG items at discharge? I know the goal might be going away, or it is proposed that the goal will go away is just expand a little bit more, not the exact specs.
      1. Comment from CMS: I think that it would probably be better answered once you phrase your question, and we keep a tally of it to the actual mailbox. If it comes up again, we can also help other providers answer that question.

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