

OMB Reviewing Final Medicare Payment Rules

The White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) recently began reviewing final Medicare payment rules for physician services, hospital outpatient services, home health services and dialysis services. The comment periods for the physician and hospital outpatient rules are expected to be extended when the final rules are published and an extended comment period may mean that CMS is making major changes to the earlier proposed versions.

CMS does not discuss changes to regulations prior to publishing them, so it's unclear what changes the Agency might have made to the earlier proposals.

Both the Physician Fee Schedule and the Hospital Outpatient Prospective Payment System proposed rules included controversial items.

CMS usually vets the payment rules with OMB before submitting them and CMS typically publishes payment rules on Fridays after the Wall Street markets close, so the agency might publish the rules as soon as October 23rd after 4:15 p.m. However, CMS usually publishes these rules around the first of November so it's likely that they may not be released until after October 30th.

The AAPM will review and analyze the Medicare final rule for 2016 and provide information on the website and host member webinars later this year.