The Connecticut Association for Healthcare at Home supports its members in the provision of exceptional quality and accessible services through collaboration, leadership, provision of information, advocacy and education.

Now That CMS Has Finalized PDGM, Agencies Must Begin Preparing Immediately

Source: HHL

Agencies that wait until the last minute to prepare for the Patient-Driven Groupings Model (PDGM) may put themselves in huge financial trouble when it launches, industry experts say.

PDGM will begin "on or after" Jan. 1, 2020, according to the 2019 PPS final rule posted Oct. 31 on the Federal Register. That language differs from the proposed rule, when CMS indicated PDGM would start on Jan. 1, 2020.

Either way, the model will require a significant investment of time and resources and agencies should get started now, industry experts say.

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This Video Explains the Medicare Home Health Final Rule and What NAHC is Doing to Improve It

Source: NAHC

By now, you know the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released the CY 2019 Medicare Home Health Final Rule on Halloween. (See this NAHC Report for more details.) It's a mixture of good and bad and while we are grateful for the good parts, NAHC is determined to fix the bad parts and we have a plan to do it.

You're probably asking these questions:

1. What is in the Final Rule?
2. How will it affect my business and patients?
3. Can it be improved?
4. If so, what is NAHC doing about it?
In the video below (also to be found on the front page of our website, nahc.org, NAHC President William A. Dombi explains what's in the rule, what it means for home health, the good, the bad, and what NAHC is doing - and will be doing - to remove the bad parts from the Final Rule. Even more importantly, Bill explains what YOU can do to help. Please watch.

Watch Video

America’s Veterans Deserve the Highest Quality Home Care and Hospice

Source: NAHC

On Monday, November 12, the United States honored its veterans with Veterans Day, a national holiday. However, making sure our veterans receive the care and recognition they have earned should involve a lot more than a federal holiday in the second week of November. Those who have made great sacrifices deserve proper care when they come home, particularly if they suffer from debilitating health issues, whether in their senior years or earlier in their lives.

- Among the common maladies afflicting our veterans are:
  - Post-traumatic stress disorder
  - Depression and other mental health issues
  - Traumatic brain injury
  - Musculoskeletal injuries and pain
  - Infectious disease;
  - Chemical exposure;
  - Noise and vibration exposure/sensitivity.

Tragically, an estimated 18 to 22 American vets commit suicide daily. No American should find that statistic tolerable. Our veterans deserve the highest quality health care and that includes care in the home.

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HHA Burdens and Costs of PCRD/RCD Are Far Greater Than CMS Admits or Portrays

Source: NAHC

The burdens and costs of 100% pre-claim or post-payment review are real and obvious. RCD involves much more for HHAs than maintaining a compliant patient record. Outside of RCD, an HHA typically has less than 2% of its claims subject to "complex medical review." With RCD, 100% of claims will go through that process, some more than once. Undertaking a complex medical requires extensive additional activities for the HHA. These activities include: assembly of the complete record, full record review to determine whether it is compliant, development of a summary to support eligibility, and highlighting portions of the record that address eligibility standards. In addition, the HHA must submit the record though the process established by the MAC. That includes segmenting and separating parts of the record to fit the submission standards. None of these tasks are performed outside of a complex medical review by the MAC.

Continue Reading
White Paper: Top Six Trends Impacting Hospice Care in 2019
Source: Optima

The hospice industry continues to see rapid changes in the regulatory and business landscape, and providers are poised for even more changes in the coming year. Click here to review this Optima newly released White Paper addressing these trends.

Learn what's in store for your business with six of the biggest trends impacting hospice care in 2019, including:

- The challenges hospices face with clinical documentation
- How it impacts different areas of their business
- How the use of technology impacts confidence levels

Also, get insights to help you navigate these changes and ensure your success!

NHPCO Celebrates National Hospice and Palliative Care Month by Helping Americans Understand Hospice is a Program that Works and a Benefit that Matters
Source: NHPCO

NHPCO Leads Awareness Efforts this November to Highlight the Value of Patient-Centered, Integrated End-of-Life Care

(Alexandria, Va) - National Hospice and Palliative Care Month is celebrated every November across the nation and the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization is working with its membership to increase public awareness about the benefits of hospice and palliative care. This year's theme, "My Hospice. A Program that Works. A Benefit that Matters," builds on the success of hospice care in the U.S. and highlights the value it brings to individuals, families, and the overall healthcare delivery system.

What began as primarily a volunteer-driven, grassroots movement in the 1970's, is now an integrated part of our nation's health care delivery system that provides care to more than 1.43 million Medicare beneficiaries and their families every year.

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CMS Posts List of Quality Reporting-Compliant Hospices, Other Quality Updates
Source: NAHC

In recent days the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) posted the following updates related to the Hospice Quality Reporting Program (Hospice QRP):

Hospice QRP APU FY 2019: Successful Facilities: In keeping with its announced intention in the Fiscal Year 2016 Hospice Wage Index and Payment Rate Update and Hospice Quality Reporting Requirements Final Rule to annually publish the list of hospice organizations that have met the quality reporting requirements for the forthcoming payment year, CMS has completed processing of all reconsideration requests and has now published the list for FY2019. The list may be viewed HERE or on the HQRP Requirements and Best Practices webpage.

Continue Reading
New National Guidelines Seek to Improve Access to Palliative Care for People Living with Serious Illness

Source: NHPCO

NHPCO has been a proud member of the National Coalition for Hospice and Palliative Care and has been instrumental in the development of the guidelines since the 1st edition was published in 2004.

(Alexandria, Va.) - New national palliative care clinical practice guidelines seek to ensure the millions of people living with serious illness, such as heart failure, lung disease and cancer, have access to vital care that can help meet their needs. The guidelines promote improved access to palliative care, which is focused on giving patients and their caregivers relief from the symptoms and stress of serious illness, is based on need, not prognosis, and can be provided along with disease-focused treatment.

Scheduled for publication Oct. 31, the Clinical Practice Guidelines for Quality Palliative Care, 4th edition calls for a seismic shift in the delivery of this specialized care by urging all health care professionals and organizations to integrate it into the services they provide to people living with serious illness. The guidelines also include tools, resources and practice examples to help with implementation.

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QUESTIONS? CONCERNS? COMMENTS?
Connecticut Association for Healthcare at Home
Tracy Wodatch
VP of Clinical & Regulatory Services
wodatch@cthealthcareathome.org

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