This Week in Health Policy...

- The Patients’ Bill of Rights
- 23 September 2010
- Patient-Centered Medical Homes
- HIT Certification FAQ
This week, several new provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act go into effect, including the Patients’ Bill of Rights.

**Highlights**

Beginning on or about 23 September 2010, it will be unlawful for insurance companies to:

- Exclude children with pre-existing conditions
  - Arbitrarily rescind insurance coverage
  - Place lifetime limits on coverage
- Restrict coverage to annual dollar limits
- Restrict emergency care to in-network providers.

*Photo credit: [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)*
In addition to the Patients’ Bill of Rights, several other provisions take effect on or about 23 September 2010. For a video synopsis, click here.

Notably:

• Insurance companies can no longer retroactively cancel policies because of honest mistakes on an application, unless they can prove fraud.

• Patients may now demand an external appeal by an independent reviewer if a claim is denied.

• New health plans must now provide preventive care without charging co-pays or other out-of-pocket fees.

• New plans must give patients the flexibility to see any OB/GYN of their choice, without a referral from any other doctor.
The Affordable Care Act promotes the development of payment models that promote a patient-centered medical home. A recent study published in Health Affairs estimated that Group Health Cooperative in Seattle generated a $1.50 return on every dollar invested in their medical home pilot program.

The following are essential components of a patient-centered medical home:

- Unfettered access to a personal physician
- Coordinated care via a team approach
- Data exchange to facilitate smart clinical decisions
- Effective use of re-aligned financial incentives

Interested in a medical home pilot program?
Contact us:
healthpolicy@nmanet.org

Photo credit: RWJF
The Latest from ONC: HIT Systems Certification

The Office of the National Coordinator of Health Information Technology (ONC) has issued a list of frequently asked questions (FAQ) regarding certification of HIT systems. Posted on the ONC website, the FAQ include questions from vendors and providers alike, such as:

• “How many clinical quality measures must EHR technology be capable of calculating in order to get certified?”

• “I submitted a Complete EHR for certification, but it has not passed a test for one or more of the certification criteria. Can I request that the ONC-ATCB certify the EHR technology that I submitted as an EHR Module instead (i.e., certify only those capabilities that have been tested successfully)?”

• “I plan on sending/transferring meaningful use quality reporting data from my EHR technology to my “data warehouse” and have the data warehouse submit/report out the data to CMS. Does my data warehouse need to be certified?”
What You Can Do

• Let us know if you’re interested in a medical home demo. We welcome your feedback at healthpolicy@nmanet.org.

• Get involved in advocacy at the local level!

• New email address? Let us know at healthpolicy@nmanet.org.

For the latest health policy news and information, visit our page NMA Health Policy Updates.

Continue to visit our Haiti Earthquake Relief page for information on relief efforts.
Resources


