POLICY BEAT
Weekly Digest
September 27th – October 1st, 2010

This Week in Health Policy…
• Continuing Resolution
• HHS Solicits Public Comment
• Health Care Workforce Statistics
• IOM Studies Medicare Spending

Office of Health Policy and Government Relations
This week, the U.S. Congress passed a continuing resolution (CR) enacted to keep the Federal government functional from 1 October through 3 December 2010. Congress has now adjourned until the November ‘lame duck’ session.

**Highlights**

- CR funds most programs at FY 2010 levels
- CR extends FEMA’s authority to help states with disaster mitigation
- CR authorizes $305M for Public Health Emergency Fund

*Photo credit: Architect of the Capitol*
Implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) requires regulations for which the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) seeks public input. PPACA also directs HHS to establish panels and committees for which they now invite nominations. You may submit your comments by clicking the links below.

- National Quality Strategy and Plan: click here. Due Oct. 15
- Advisory Committee on Minority Health: click here. Due Oct. 20
- Planning and Establishment of State-Level Exchanges: click here. Due Oct. 4
According to the most recent employment estimates from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the health care sector showed the largest increase in jobs created from July to August 2010. For more details, click here.

Specifically, these occupations were most in demand:

- Ambulatory Care Services, ~16,900 positions
- Physicians’ offices, ~5,300 positions
- Home health care services, ~2,800 positions
- Outpatient care services, ~2,700 positions
The Latest from IOM: Geographic Variation in Spending

To address geographic variations in Medicare spending and outcomes across the nation, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) will recommend changes that would promote the delivery of high-value care, “especially for high-volume, high-cost conditions.” Beginning on 1 October, IOM will invite public comment. Please click here for more information.

This study will focus on:

- Cost and quality of care
- Patients’ current health status
- Patients’ health outcomes
- Diversity within populations
- What evidence guides clinical decisions
- Patient preferences
- Access to care.

Image: www.50states.com
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


