

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



### We Can't Afford to Lose Primary Care Physicians Over the CMS Quality Payment Program (QPP) – Help is Here

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2017 - 2018 ACOFP President

The ACOFP is constantly looking for ways to make our members' lives as physicians easier and to increase stability in these challenging times. The most common thing that members are struggling with, especially in solo, small and rural practices, is making sense of the CMS Quality Payment Program (QPP). This year, Quality Reporting is 60 percent of the Composite Payment Score and affects whether you get an incentive or penalty for your Medicare Part B Fee-For-Service (FFS) patients.

While CMS has tried to help by setting up a training website on the QPP, you can get lost in pages of explanations, which I will refer to as "CMS-speak." It is frustrating to all physicians, but this weighs most heavily on those who "go-it-alone," or have severely restricted resources such as the rural physician communities.

With a shortage of Primary Care Physicians estimated at 14,900 to 35,600 by 2025,<sup>1</sup> and a 55 percent increase of patients age 65 or older since 2010,<sup>2</sup> we can't afford to lose any Primary Care Physicians due to compounding annual CMS penalties. In 2017, the penalty is negative 4 percent of the Medicare FFS revenues, and by 2020 it will grow to negative 9 percent. To avoid these penalties, we need to master the QPP. The plus side is that if you are successful at improving patient outcomes you can gain incentives which can be well above the plus 4 percent to plus 9 percent range.<sup>3</sup> ACOFP would like to share a no-cost way to achieve these incentive payments.

To assist physicians who are in solo, small, and rural practices, ACOFP has partnered with the National Rural Accountable Care Consortium (NRACC), a not-for-profit organization, to bring practices the help they need – at no cost to them. ACOFP is extending an invitation to solo, small and rural practices in all 50 states to join the Practice Transformation Network – as the first step towards the incentives you work so hard for.

What does this look like? The NRACC will provide tools, training, and consulting for you and your practice to maximize patient outcomes and stabilize your revenue streams.

- Modify clinic workflows to address patient care gaps and improve patient outcomes (quality)
- Identify and train a Care Coordinator for your practice to manage the more complex patients, allowing you more time to see patients
- Care Coordinators will be trained and certified, at no cost
- Understand the Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS), and be guided through the steps by trained healthcare consultants
- Insure that you are conducting and billing for Medicare Prevention Services, many physicians overlook these, despite having patients who need these services
- Implement an innovative care management, population health system to automate patient care and quality management
- Utilize a 24-hour nurse-staffed patient hotline provided for your Medicare patients at no charge
- Improve patient satisfaction at the point of care – your practice will be provided a tablet which will allow patients to quickly complete a patient satisfaction survey
- Assistance will be provided so your practice can be certified as a Patient-Centered Medical Home – earn credits towards your Composite Payment Score for the QPP.

I hope this convinces you to take the next step, which is to sign-up at [www.acofp.org/ptn](http://www.acofp.org/ptn) and an Enrollment Specialist from the Practice Transformation Network will contact you. There are limited spaces, and the deadline is October 1, 2017, or when it is full. Please call the ACOFP office for additional information at 847-952-5523.

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