

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 42 CFR 447.205, the Georgia Department of Community Health, Division of Medical Assistance, is required to give public notice of any significant proposed changes in its methods and standards for setting payment rates for services.

PAYMENT RATES FOR HOSPITAL SERVICES

Effective for admissions on and after January 1, 2008 and subject to payment at fee for service rates, the Department is proposing to update its current Diagnosis Related Group (DRG) payment method for inpatient services to include the following changes:

- Use of a more current DRG grouper (Tricare version 24);
- Updated DRG relative weights and threshold amounts based on claim data from State fiscal year 2005 and, if necessary for DRGs with a low number of claims, State fiscal year 2004;
- Updated base rates, add-on amounts per case and cost to charge ratios based on claim data from State fiscal year 2005, cost report data from fiscal years 2004 and capital survey data for calendar years 2004 through 2006;
- For hospitals assigned to the specialty peer group, a hospital-specific base rate will be used. For all other hospitals, the peer group's base rate will continue to be used in determining payment amounts.

The Department will also modify its State Plan description of hospital payment methods to remove references to past dates and to remove citations to federal regulations and definitions that have been or will be subject to change by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services; such modifications will not cause any changes to the Department's payment policies.

The purpose of these changes is to more accurately match payments to the level of services being provided and to more accurately describe payment policies. No change in annual aggregate expenditures is expected. The changes are contingent on approval of available federal financial participation by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. A summary of proposed DRG rates may be obtained by written request to the Department of Community Health, 2 Peachtree Street, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30303.

This public notice is available for review at each county Department of Family and Children Services office. An opportunity for public comment will be held on July 24, 2007 at 10:00 a.m., at the Department of Community Health, 2 Peachtree Street, N.W., 40th Floor Board Room, Atlanta, Georgia 30303. Individuals who are disabled and need assistance to participate during this meeting should call (404) 656-4479. Citizens wishing to comment in writing on any of the proposed changes should do so on or before August 1, 2007, to the Board of Community Health, Post Office Box 38406, Atlanta, Georgia 30334.

Comments submitted will be available for review by the public at the Department of Community Health, Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., in Room 4074, 2 Peachtree Street, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30303.

Comments will be summarized and provided to the Board of Community Health prior to the August 9, 2007 Board meeting. The Board will vote on the proposed changes after comments have been received. The August Board meeting will be held at 10:30 a.m. in the Twin Towers Building, Floyd Room, 20th Floor, West Tower, 200 Piedmont Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia 30334.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THIS 12th DAY OF JULY, 2007
Rhonda M. Medows, M.D., Commissioner