



CMS NEWS

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Partnership for Patients Meets Goal of Over 2,000 Hospitals Participating *Obama Administration's initiative aims to improve patients' safety and lower costs*

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced today that nearly 4,500 organizations -- including over 2,000 hospitals -- have pledged their support for the Partnership for Patients, the Obama Administration's new nationwide patient safety initiative. In less than three months, the Administration has met its goal of having 2,000 hospitals pledge their support.

On a conference call with leaders of major hospitals, employers, health plans, physicians, nurses, patient advocates, and state government officials, the Secretary reported on the progress of the Partnership for Patients, encouraging them to reach out to colleagues and to get started on the challenging but critical work of making care safer, more reliable and less costly for all Americans.

"This level of participation, this early, is evidence of the strong support across the country for strengthening American health care for future generations by improving it; not cutting it as some have proposed to do," said Secretary Sebelius.

Secretary Sebelius specifically commended Iowa hospitals for their 100 percent participation in the patient safety initiative and said, "At a time when Medicare costs are expected to rise steeply over the next decade -- and given that we lose billions to waste, harm, and error in care -- every partner in this program has committed to working together to build a better, safer, more reliable health care system for all."

The Secretary was joined on the call by Donald M. Berwick, M.D., Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Dr. Berwick is a nationally-recognized pioneer in health care quality improvement.

"We know that progress is possible because there are hospitals and health systems all over the country that have made major inroads against specific forms of harm," said Dr. Berwick. He pointed to the Denver Health public hospital system which he and the Secretary visited in late June, where disinfectant foam outside each patient room and checklists at the bedside have contributed to fewer infections, and efforts to make care delivery more efficient and reliable have generated resources to provide more than \$400 million in care to the uninsured.

With the collective effort of private and public stakeholders, the Partnership for Patients aims to reduce preventable harm in hospitals by 40 percent in the next three years. This means a reduction in the number of preventable in-hospital medication errors, central-line associated bloodstream infections, falls and other injuries. The Partnership also seeks to help patients heal successfully after discharge, targeting unnecessary return visits to reduce 30-day hospital readmissions by 20 percent over the next three years.

The Partnership for Patients also has the potential to save up to \$35 billion in health care costs, including up to \$10 billion for Medicare. Over the next ten years, the Partnership for Patients could reduce costs to Medicare by about \$50 billion and result in billions more in Medicaid savings.

The Partnership for Patients has announced two funding opportunities created by the Affordable Care Act.

The Community-Based Care Transitions Program provides up to \$500 million in funding for community based organizations in partnership with hospitals to help patients safely transition between settings of care. To read more about this program and how to apply, go to:

http://www.healthcare.gov/center/programs/partnership/safer/transitions_.html

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis.

Second, the CMS Innovation Center has posted a request for bids for state, regional, national, or hospital system organizations to manage improvement projects that affiliated hospitals may join. To read the solicitation, go to:

https://www.fbo.gov/index?s=opportunity&mode=form&id=4e5fb07c954f28a15dcfe35a31852b15&tab=core&_cvview=0

For further information on the Partnership for Patients initiative, success stories, or to join go to: <http://www.healthcare.gov/partnershipforpatients>

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