



PRESS STATEMENT
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Coalition to Preserve Rehabilitation Applauds Proposed Rule Reforming Regulations for Medicare Advantage

Coalition views proposed rule as an important step forward for patients with disabilities and chronic conditions and their providers

Washington, D.C. – January 20, 2023: The Coalition to Preserve Rehabilitation (CPR) commends the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for its [proposed rule](#) on policy changes to Medicare Advantage (MA) plans for 2024. CPR strongly supports CMS’s proposals to ensure patient access to care by reining-in the use of prior authorization, proprietary guidelines, and other “utilization management” techniques.

If adopted as proposed, the rule would require MA plans to reform their processes and practices to strengthen patient protections. CPR has long-standing concerns that MA plans unnecessarily and inappropriately restrict patient access to medically necessary care, especially in the area of medical rehabilitation. Under this rule, CMS would:

- Explicitly require MA plans to comply with all existing coverage requirements under Traditional Medicare;
- Prevent MA plans from denying coverage based on internal or proprietary criteria that are not publicly available or specified in CMS law and guidelines;
- Limit plans’ use of prior authorization; and
- Require plans to establish standing committees to regularly review and update their utilization management policies.

“With half of all Medicare beneficiaries in Medicare Advantage, we’re grateful that CMS has heard beneficiary concerns and proposed these important protective rules,” stated Judith Stein, Executive Director of the Center for Medicare Advocacy. “From reports by the Office of Inspector General highlighting the abuses of prior authorization to the growing complaints from Medicare beneficiaries our organization receives on a daily basis, we’re pleased to see CMS begin to address the misbehavior of Medicare Advantage plans and the inequities facing beneficiaries enrolled in MA.”

“Many of the new prior authorization regulations are in direct response to requests and comments that CPR and others across the rehabilitation field have been proposing for years, said Rick Willis, President and CEO of the Brain Injury Association of America. “This rule is a win



not only for the 28 million seniors and people with disabilities enrolled in MA plans but for providers of health care and rehabilitation services as well.”

Alexandra Bennewith, Vice President, Government Relations, the United Spinal Association added, “While most MA organizations say that utilization management tools are designed to ensure appropriate medical coverage, in practice, our members report that prior authorization delays patient care and often leads to denials. We want significant reform of utilization management tools used routinely by MA plans. This rule delivers many of these reforms and we are grateful to CMS for proposing this rule.”

The Coalition to Preserve Rehabilitation (CPR) is a coalition of national consumer, clinician, and membership organizations with the goal of preserving and improving access to inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation services. CPR is led by a Steering Committee of six leading patient organizations representing individuals with disabilities, injuries, illnesses, and chronic conditions, including the Brain Injury Association of America, the Center for Medicare Advocacy, the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation, Falling Forward Foundation, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, and United Spinal Association.

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