

CMS Awards \$347 Million to 16 Health Care Organizations to Improve Care Quality for Medicare Patients

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has taken the next step in its mission to improve safety and reduce hospital readmissions for Medicare patients by awarding \$347 million to 16 health care organizations to serve as Hospital Improvement and Innovation Networks (HIINs). The HIINs are tasked with continuing patient safety improvement efforts that were started under CMS's Partnership for Patients initiative, a public-private partnership of physicians, nurses, hospitals, employers, patients and their advocates, the federal government and state governments working to improve the quality, safety and affordability of health care for all Americans.

"We have made significant progress in keeping patients safe—an estimated 2.1 million fewer patients harmed, 87,000 lives saved and nearly \$20 billion in cost savings from 2010 to 2014—and we are focused on accelerating improvement efforts," said Dr. Patrick Conway, CMS acting principal deputy administrator and chief medical officer.

To build on this success, CMS has set for the HIINs new goals that will continue this "strong momentum in improving the quality of care delivered to Medicare patients": Achieve, through 2019, a 20% decrease in overall patient harm and a 12% reduction in 30-day hospital readmissions as a population-based measure (readmissions per 1,000 people) from the 2014 baseline.

According to Rick Pollack, president and CEO of the American Hospital Association (AHA), America's hospitals embrace the goals CMS has proposed. "The vast majority of the nation's 5,000 hospitals were involved in the successful pursuit of the initial Partnership for Patients aims," he said. "Our goal is to get to zero incidents. AHA and our members intend to keep an unrelenting focus on providing better, safer care to our patients—working in close partnership with the federal government and with each other."

The HIINs also will work to expand and develop learning collaboratives for hospitals and provide an array of initiatives and activities to improve patient safety in the Medicare program. Topics to be addressed include adverse drug events, central-line-associated blood stream infections, catheter-associated urinary tract infections, *Clostridium difficile* infection, injury from falls and immobility, pressure ulcers, sepsis and septic shock, surgical site infections, venous thromboembolism, ventilator-associated events and readmissions.

CMS noted that efforts to address health equity for Medicare beneficiaries will be central to the HIINs' goals and added that it will monitor and evaluate the HIINs' activities to ensure that they are generating results and improving patient safety.

A complete list of the organizations that received contracts is available on the [CMS website](#).