

College of Public Health – N232A  
105 River Street  
Iowa City, IA 52242  
(319)-384-3832

<http://www.rupri.org/panelandnetworkviewer.php?id=9>

[Keith-mueller@uiowa.edu](mailto:Keith-mueller@uiowa.edu)

### Rural Health Panel

Keith J. Mueller, PhD., Chair  
Andrew F. Coburn, Ph.D.  
Jennifer P. Lundblad, Ph.D., M.B.A.  
A. Clinton MacKinney, M.D., M.S.  
Timothy D. McBride, Ph.D.  
Sidney Watson, J.D.

September 6, 2013  
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services  
Department of Health and Human Services  
Attention: CMS-9972-P  
P.O. Box 8012  
Baltimore, MD 21244-1850  
By electronic submission at <http://www.regulations.gov>

RE: CMS-1600-P, Proposed Rule: Medicare Program: Revisions to Payment Policies under the Physician Fee Schedule, Clinical Laboratory Fee Schedule & Other Revisions in Part B for CY 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

The Rural Policy Research Institute Health Panel (Panel) was established in 1993 to provide science-based, objective policy analysis to federal policy makers. The Panel is pleased offer comments regarding the Department's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to implement the new Health Insurance Market Rules consistent with the Affordable Care Act.

The Panel understands that CMS will receive comprehensive comments from a wide variety of sources. Thus we will limit our comment to selected rural-specific issues.

**PROPOSED RULE:** Proposed 45 CFR §410.78(b)(4)(i) modifies originating sites for telemedicine to include rural census tracts of Metropolitan Statistical Areas, as determined by the Office of Rural Health Policy.

**COMMENT:** The Panel concurs with this change as being consistent with geographic-based need for telemedicine services.

**PROPOSED RULE:** Proposed 45 CFR §410.78(b)(4) establishes and maintains geographic eligibility on annual basis.

**COMMENT:** The Panel agrees that this change will provide more certainty for those installing and using telemedicine to serve rural populations. We assume the annual cycle will not inhibit implementing demonstrations and pilot projects during the year (out of cycle).

**POPOSED RULE:** Proposed 45 CFR §410.78(b) adds CPT codes for transitional care management services to the list of telemedicine services in category 1.

**COMMENT:** The Panel concurs with this addition, and recommends CMS monitor the use of these services in underserved rural areas.

Sincerely,

The Rural Policy Research Institute Health Panel

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