

adverse or critical comments are received, no further activity is contemplated. If EPA receives significant adverse or critical comments, the direct final action will be withdrawn and all public comments received will be addressed in a subsequent final rule based on this proposed rule. The EPA will not institute a second comment period. Any parties interested in commenting should do so at this time.

DATES: Comments concerning this action must be received by September 18, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be submitted to: Caroline Kwan, Remedial Project Manager, Emergency and Remedial Response Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region II, 290 Broadway, 20th Floor, New York, New York 10007-1866.

Comprehensive information on this Site is available through the public docket contained at: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region II, Superfund Records Center, 290 Broadway, Room 1828, New York, New York 10007-1866, (212) 637-4308. Hours: 9 AM to 5 PM, Monday through Friday.

Information on the Site is also available for viewing at the following information repository locations: The Press Office at the Mayor's Office, Casa Alcaldia de Juana Diaz, Calle Degetau, (787) 837-2185. Hours: 8 AM to Noon; 1 PM to 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Caribbean Environmental Protection Division, Centro Europa Building, 1492 Ponce De Leon Avenue, Suite 207, Santurce, Puerto Rico 00907, (787) 729-6951 Ext. 263. Hours: 7 AM to 4 PM, Monday through Friday.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Kwan may be contacted at the above address, by telephone at (212) 637-4275, by FAX at (212) 637-4284 or via e-mail at kwan.caroline@epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: For additional information, see the Direct Final Action which is located in the Rules section of this **Federal Register**.

Authority: 33 U.S.C. 1321(c)(2); 42 U.S.C. 9601-9657; E.O. 12777, 56 FR 54757, 3 CFR, 1991 Comp., p. 351; E.O. 12580, 52 FR 2923, 3 CFR, 1987 Comp., p. 193.

Dated: July 28, 2000.

William J. Muszynski,

Acting Regional Administrator, Region II.

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Health Care Financing Administration

42 CFR Part 405

[HCFA-3432-N4]

Medicare Program; Open Town Hall Meeting to Discuss Criteria for Making Coverage Decisions—August 31, 2000

AGENCY: Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), HHS.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: This document announces a town hall meeting for all interested parties to discuss criteria we would use to make certain national coverage decisions. This meeting presents one aspect of the evolving process for making the Medicare coverage process more open and responsive to the public.

DATES: August 31, 2000, from 9 a.m. until 12 noon, E.D.T.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the HCFA headquarters auditorium, 7500 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, Maryland 21244.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Patricia Brocato-Simons at 410-786-0261.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

On April 27, 1999, we published a notice in the **Federal Register** (64 FR 22619) that announced the process we use to make national coverage decisions under the Medicare program. We also announced that we would not be adopting, as final, a 1989 proposed rule that set forth the criteria we would have used to make coverage decisions under Medicare. On May 16, 2000, we published a notice of intent (NOI) in the **Federal Register** (65 FR 31124) that announced our intention to issue a proposed rule and solicited advance public comments on the criteria we would use to make national coverage decisions under the "reasonable and necessary" provisions of section 1862(a)(1) of the Social Security Act (the Act). We extended the closing date of the comment period from June 15, 2000 to July 17, 2000. We received 118 public comments from major organizations and individuals with an interest in our coverage process. Commenters expressed their views on the following issues:

- Cost as a coverage criterion.
- Increased evidence burden.
- Limited choice or interference with the practice of medicine.
- Withdrawal of coverage.

- Burden of proof.

In the NOI, we explained that these coverage decisions are prospective, population-based policies that apply to a clinical subset or class of Medicare beneficiaries. We described the clinical circumstances and setting under which an item or service is available (or not available). We included information and approaches we are considering at this time for making coverage decisions. We also clarified that the NOI was not intended to address individual medical necessity determinations and claims adjudications by our contractors and other adjudicators, nor was it intended to address changes in current Medicare payment policies.

II. Format of Meeting

We will begin the meeting with a brief overview of the May NOI that solicited advance public comments on proposed criteria we would use in making future, national coverage decisions. Following this introduction will be a more detailed explanation of HCFA's NOI criteria for sake of clarity. This discussion will then be followed by a specified amount of time for public presentations by participants who submit a prior request to speak.

III. Registration

Individuals may register by contacting Ms. Patricia Brocato-Simons either by telephone at 410-786-0261, by mail, at 7500 Security Boulevard, Mail Stop S3-02-01, Baltimore, Maryland 21244-1850, fax, at 410-786-9286, or electronically at Pbrocatosimons@hcfa.gov. Please provide, as applicable, your name, title, firm name, address, telephone number, fax number, and electronic mailing address. Participants who wish to display an exhibit or make a presentation at the meeting are asked to contact Ms. Brocato-Simons at 410-786-0261 or via E-mail at Pbrocatosimons@hcfa.gov as soon as possible. Please identify the topic(s) for your presentation and an estimate of the amount of time required to make the presentation. Because of time constraints, we may need to limit the number of individuals who make presentations. We will notify participants who have been selected to make a presentation. We will assign presentation times before the meeting. While the meeting is open to the public, attendance is limited to the space available.

We will accept written questions, comments, or other materials, before and during the meeting, or up to 14 days after the meeting. Address comments to: DHHS, HCFA, ATTN: Patricia Brocato-

Simons, Office of Clinical Standards and Quality/CAG, Room S3-02-01, 7500 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, Maryland 21244-1850, Telephone Number: (410) 786-0261, Fax Number: (410) 786-9286, E-mail: Pbrocatosimons@hcfa.gov. Although there is no special format for the materials, we request that commenters be clear about the issue or aspect of the proposed process on which they have a question, comment, or suggestion.

Authority: Sections 1102 and 1871 of the Act (42 U.S.C. 1302 and 1395hh).

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program No. 98.773, Medicare-Hospital Insurance; and Program No. 93.774, Medicare-Supplementary Medicare insurance Program.)

Dated: August 14, 2000.

Nancy-Ann Min DeParle,

Administrator, Health Care Financing Administration.

[FR Doc. 00-21084 Filed 8-16-00; 8:45 am]

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

47 CFR Parts 36 and 54

[CC Docket No. 96-45; DA 00-1825]

Common Carrier Bureau Seeks Comment on Updating Line Counts for Calculating High-Cost Universal Service Support for Non-Rural Carriers for the Year 2001

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Proposed rule; extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: In a Public Notice in this proceeding released on July 24, 2000, the Common Carrier Bureau (Bureau) sought comment on updating line count values for purposes of determining support for the year 2001. In this document, the Bureau extends the comment cycle of that Public Notice. The Bureau has extended the comment cycle to give the public more time to respond. The Bureau extends the original comment date from August 28, 2000 to August 30, 2000. The reply comment date has been extended from August 15, 2000 to September 6, 2000.

DATES: Submit comments on or before August 30, 2000 and reply comments on or before September 6, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Federal Communications Commission, 445 12th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20554, room TW-B204.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Katie King, Attorney, Common Carrier

Bureau, Accounting Policy Division, (202) 418-7400 TTY: (202) 418-0484.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The full text of this document is available for public inspection and copying during regular business hours at the FCC Reference Information Center, Portals II, 445 12th Street, SW., Room CY-A257, Washington, DC 20554. This document may also be purchased from the Commission's copy contractor, International Transcription Service, Inc. (ITS), 1231 20th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20036, telephone 202-857-3800, facsimile 202-857-3805.

On July 24, 2000, the Common Carrier Bureau released a Public Notice seeking comment on updating line counts for calculating high-cost universal service support for non-rural carriers for the year 2001 and establishing comment and reply comment dates of August 8 and August 15, 2000, respectively. We extend the comment and reply comment dates to August 30 and September 6, 2000, respectively. Accordingly, reply comments addressing comments filed August 8 and August 30, 2000 are due September 6, 2000.

On October 21, 1999, the Commission adopted two orders implementing a new high-cost universal service support mechanism for non-rural carriers for determining support beginning January 1, 2000. The Commission recognized the importance of updating the inputs in the universal service cost model as technology and other conditions change. On April 7, 2000, the Commission released an order clarifying how updated line count data, filed by non-rural carriers every quarter, would be used to determine support amounts for the year 2000. In this Public Notice, we seek comment on updating line count input values for purposes of determining support for the year 2001.

Line counts are used for two general purposes in the high-cost support mechanism for non-rural carriers. First, line counts are used in the universal service cost model to estimate the forward-looking costs of providing supported services. Second, line counts are used to calculate support based on those costs and target that support to high-cost areas.

We seek comment on updating line count data in the universal service cost model. If the line count input values are not updated, non-rural support would continue to increase indefinitely because of line growth. Thus, the non-rural high-cost support mechanism would never take into account the economies of scale resulting from serving more lines. On July 31, 2000, non-rural carriers will file year-end

1999 wire center line count data. We specifically seek comment on whether the Commission should update the line count input values used in the cost model for purposes of determining support amounts for the year 2001. If the Commission were to use these updated line counts in the model, we seek comment on how these line counts, which are USF loops, should be allocated to the classes of service used in the model. In particular, we seek comment on whether the Commission should use wire center line count data filed by non-rural carriers pursuant to the *1999 Data Request* to allocate lines to the classes of service used in the model. If the Commission were to use the *1999 Data Request* to allocate USF loops to switched line categories, we also seek comment on how to determine the number of special lines in each wire center. Now that carriers file wire center line count data, these line counts should be matched to the wire centers used in the model. Accordingly, we also seek comment on how to match the quarterly wire center line counts with the wire centers in the model.

Pursuant to §§ 1.415 and 1.419 of the Commission's rules, interested parties may file comments on or before August 30, 2000 and reply comments on or before September 6, 2000. Comments may be filed using the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) or by filing paper copies. See *Electronic Filing of Documents in Rulemaking Proceedings*, 63 FR 24,121 (1998). Comments filed through the ECFS can be sent as an electronic file via the Internet to <<http://www.fcc.gov/e-file/ecfs.html>>. Generally, only one copy of an electronic submission must be filed. If multiple docket or rulemaking numbers appear in the caption of this proceeding, however, commenters must transmit one electronic copy of the comments to each docket or rulemaking number referenced in the caption. In completing the transmittal screen, commenters should include their full name, Postal Service mailing address, and the applicable docket or rulemaking number. Parties may also submit electronic comments by Internet e-mail. To receive filing instructions for e-mail comments, commenters should send an e-mail to ecfs@fcc.gov, and should include the following words in the body of the message, "get form <your e-mail address>." A sample form and directions will be sent in reply. Parties who choose to file by paper must file an original and four copies of each filing. If more than one docket or rulemaking number appears in the caption of this