

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

Physician Notes: New AMA Tool Offers Advice on Which MACRA Model is Right For You

With MACRA's Quality Payment Program (QPP) set to begin Jan. 1, 2017, Medicare providers are in for a complete overhaul of a system they've become accustomed to. Despite the hints, releases, and now mandates that have been gradually coming on since MACRA's inception in 2015, many providers find themselves bewildered and unready to move from a fee-for-service, one-size-fits-all structure to a pay-for-performance, tailor-made, tiered system.

The AMA has been working hand-in-hand with CMS to assist providers with the transfer from one ideology to another. Enlisting leaders in the health care industry as well as physicians on the frontline who service Medicare beneficiaries daily, the AMA has compiled and designed three resources specifically for physicians to figure out how to adapt to the new payment plan.

"MACRA represents the most significant change to Medicare's physician payment system in a generation, and the AMA is working to help physicians navigate this change and make sure they are prepared for it," said **Andrew Gurman, MD**, AMA president, in an Oct. 5, 2016 press release.

In addition to extending its STEPS Forward program—which has been updated to now include 42 learning modules devoted to educating physicians and their staffs on MACRA and other health care-related issues—the AMA has also introduced two other innovations targeting the worried practitioner. The other offerings that complete the trio of resources are:

- The AMA Payment Model Evaluator is a creative online tool that compiles a practice's data through a questionnaire then makes a suggestion based on the detailed information on which MACRA payment plan would be best for that particular practice.
- The AMA's ReachMD series called Inside Medicare's New Payment System is an informative podcast that explains the changes coming through talks with AMA elite and CMS leaders like **Andy Slavitt**.

"We know there are challenges under the new system, but the recent announcement of the 'Pick Your Pace' reporting options indicates not only that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services is responsive to the AMA's advocacy on behalf of physicians," Gurman said. "But, that it is working to give physicians a fair chance to be successful in the new payment framework."

Resource. For more information on the three AMA initiatives and a complete read of the press release, visit <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/news/news/2016/2016-10-05-ama-introduces-new-tools-macra.page>.