

Eli's Rehab Report

HCFA Delays OPPTS Until Aug. 1, 2000

In a special announcement released on June 2, HCFA Administrator **Nancy-Ann Min DeParle** announced that the effective date of the hospital outpatient prospective payment system more commonly known as ambulatory payment classifications (APCs) will be delayed one month from the original July 1 expected date, until Aug. 1. Claims received for outpatient services rendered on or after Aug. 1, 2000, will be paid under the new system, while claims for outpatient services prior to Aug. 1 will be paid under the current rules.

In the memo, DeParle stated, I have made this decision because I believe that it is virtually impossible for HCFA or the hospital industry to implement the new PPS on July 1. ... In order to assure that beneficiaries are charged the correct co-insurance, I have asked the major hospital associations to help us urge the hospital industry not to collect deductibles or co-insurance from Medicare beneficiaries beginning August 1 until we notify them of the correct amount. In this way, we can ensure that most beneficiaries will be charged the correct, generally lower, co-insurance amounts when the hospitals claims are processed in August.

The full announcement can be viewed at the HCFA Web site: www.hcfa.gov/medicare/oppsmssg.htm.