

Eli's Rehab Report

News: APTA Wants More Safeguards In ACO Final Rule

The group has ten significant changes in mind.

Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) are on your horizon, but that's all you should bank on right now.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services outlined how ACOs would work in the Medicare Shared Savings Program (MSSP): Accountable Care Organizations (ACO) proposed rule, published in the April 17 Federal Register. However, at least one advocacy group isn't satisfied.

Though it calls the proposed ACO model "positive progress," the **American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)** has pinpointed several areas that "require significant modifications to create a seamless, integrated model of care that is in the best interest of Medicare beneficiaries," wrote APTA president **R. Scott Ward, PT** in a June 6 letter.

APTA's suggested modifications include:

- CMS should clarify that the expanded list of providers that may participate in the MSSP includes PTs in private practice, rehabilitation agencies, comprehensive outpatient rehabilitation facilities, inpatient rehabilitation facilities, and other providers/suppliers not specifically mentioned.
- ACOs should make financial and legal records available to all provider participants in a timely manner before contractual agreements are finalized and throughout the three-year period.
- CMS should revise the proposed quality measures to ensure that rehabilitation services such as physical therapy are integral components of ACOs. Specifically, CMS should add a sixth domain designated as patient function (activity and participation).
- CMS should make several clarifications regarding program integrity requirements. Specifically, how audits will be conducted for ACOs and its participants.

Resource: Read the full letter and all recommendations for changes at www.apta.org/PTinMotion/NewsNow/2011/6/6/ACOComments.