

## Eli's Hospice Insider

### Hospice News: New CMS Administrator Confirmed

Hospices wondering if **Seema Verma's** Indiana Medicaid program experience would be important when she took the CMS top spot have gotten their answer.

The U.S. Senate confirmed the consultant's appointment as Administrator of the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** on March 13. The next day, HHS Secretary **Tom Price** and Verma sent a letter to state governors outlining changes to come for the Medicaid program.

The letter signals "they are likely to grant states Medicaid waivers similar to the Healthy Indiana Plan 2.0 that Verma helped Indiana enact under then-Governor (**Mike**) **Pence**," notes law firm **Hall Render**. "Verma and Price also encouraged states to seek waivers that align Medicaid coverage with features found in private insurance plans, including health savings accounts, increased premiums, waivers of non-emergency medical transportation and copays, to discourage inappropriate use of emergency rooms," the firm says in its analysis.

The "reasonable, affordable premium or contribution requirements" and the copays mentioned in the letter were hallmarks of the HIP plan (see more details of her Indiana experience in Eli's HCW, Vol. XXV, No. 43). ER copays could conceivably help related quality measure scores for home health agencies.

See the letter at [www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/sec-price-cms-admin-verma-ltr.pdf](http://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/sec-price-cms-admin-verma-ltr.pdf).