

Eli's Hospice Insider

Hospice News: Proposed Rule Contains Wage Index Change

Plus: Give CMS your 2 cents on alternative care delivery models.

A revision to how Medicare arrives at hospices' wage index is a mixed bag.

Medicare would eliminate the one-year wage index lag it currently uses for hospice, under the newly proposed rule for 2020 payment. The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** "is proposing to use the FY 2020 pre-floor, pre-reclassified hospital wage index data for the FY 2020 hospice wage index rather than using the FY 2019 pre-floor, pre-reclassified hospital wage index data," the agency notes in a fact sheet about the rule.

"There are some positive aspects to this change, including that there may be increased opportunities for hospices to address concerns about wage index values with their local hospitals before they are finalized," says **Theresa Forster** with the **National Association for Home Care & Hospice**. But "a more negative aspect is that using an older wage index allows hospices to plan farther ahead and prepare for any major wage index swings that lie ahead."

Plus: CMS wants your two cents on how hospice should fit into "alternative care delivery models" including Medicare Advantage and Accountable Care Organizations.