

Eli's Hospice Insider

Hospice News: Give The Feds Feedback On Accrediting Organizations That Offer Consulting

Do you think there's something shady about accrediting organizations and the financial relationships they have with the providers they oversee? If so, now's the time to speak up. The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** has issued a Request for Information comment solicitation notice on the topic.

"Some AOs provide consulting services to the facilities they monitor and charge fees for these services," CMS notes in a release. The new RFI "asks for public input on whether these consulting fees create conflicts of interest, as the same entity is both consulting for a given facility and monitoring whether that facility is accredited to participate in Medicare," it continues.

"We are concerned that the practice of offering both accrediting and consulting services - and the financial relationships involved in this work - may undermine the integrity of accrediting organizations and erode the public's trust," CMS Administrator **Seema Verma** says in the release. "Our data shows that state-level audits of healthcare facilities are uncovering serious issues that AOs have missed, leading to high 'disparity rates' between the two reviews."

More info and instructions on submitting comments are in the notice published in the Dec. 20 Federal Register at www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2018-12-20/pdf/2018-27506.pdf. Comments are due by Feb. 19.