

## Eli's Hospice Insider

### Quality: Medicare Plans Major Hospice Compare Change

#### Get ready for Medicare Care Compare instead.

One constant in the Medicare program is change, and that applies to how potential referral sources and patients access your quality data - and compare you to your competitors.

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** plans to roll up its eight separate Compare websites, including Hospice Compare, into one "Medicare Care Compare" tool, CMS Administrator **Seema Verma** says in a recent blog post.

CMS is planning "a simplified and consistent online experience to make it easier for consumers to find and compare care," according to the post. Medicare Care Compare will allow "users to access the same information" from the current, separate eight Compare sites "through a single point of entry and simplified navigation."

The new Compare site will allow users to get "quality data by the type of health care provider," Verma adds. In addition to Hospice Compare, it will also combine the Compare sites for home health, hospitals, nursing homes, dialysis facilities, long-term care hospitals, inpatient rehab facilities, and physicians.

**Timeline:** CMS plans a Spring 2020 launch. "In the coming weeks, we'll be working with various stakeholders, including beneficiaries, patients and their advocates, health care groups, health care providers, researchers and the larger clinical community, to preview new features and gather feedback before the tools are completed and publicly launched," Verma says. "We'll continue to make improvements leading up to and following the launch as part of our iterative improvement process and are committed to ensuring beneficiaries and other users have access to the accurate and useful comparison information they rely on," she adds.

"This appears to be [a] change that will be beneficial to beneficiaries, referral sources and other members of the public," the **National Association for Home Care & Hospice's Theresa Forster** says in the trade group's newsletter.

"However," NAHC's **Mary Carr** adds, "we won't know how user-friendly this new system will be until we can see it and use it."

**Another new tool:** In conjunction with the Compare revamp, CMS plans to launch a new "Provider Data Catalog" that Medicare researchers and stakeholders can use to access more detailed data, Verma says. The catalog will "have an improved interface and intuitive search features to allow users to easily search and download CMS' publicly reported data, better serving stakeholders who use the interactive and downloadable datasets like those currently found on [data.Medicare.gov](https://data.Medicare.gov)."