

Health Information Compliance Alert

Industry Note: Data Exchange Factors in New Discharge Planning Final Rule

Medicare released another policy that interweaves interoperability with patient-centered initiatives - and this time it focuses on hospital discharges.

Context: The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) issued a final rule, published in the Federal Register, which "revises hospital discharge planning requirements for long-term care hospitals (LTCHs) and inpatient rehabilitation facilities, inpatient psychiatric facilities, children's hospitals, cancer hospitals, (IRFs), critical access hospitals (CAHs), and home health agencies (HHAs)," notes a fact sheet.

Why? CMS puts the care of patients before policy and paperwork in the rule by allowing them to have a say in their discharge plans and treatment choices, the agency claims. Plus, "the final rule revises the hospital patient's rights and the facility's requirements regarding a patient's access to their medical records," the fact sheet mentions.

The new discharge planning rule includes requirements on assisting patients with post-acute decision making, helping with transfers and referrals, following through with medical records to post-acute providers, and more.

Review the final rule at www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-09-30/pdf/2019-20732.pdf.