Announcements and Updates

**RAC “Probe and Educate” Extension** – CMS notified providers that it has extended the “Probe and Education” program in lieu of RAC audits of short-stay hospital inpatient claims through April 30, 2015. As of now, claims with a date of service from October 1, 2013 through April 30, 2015 will subject to the education program rather than audits by RAC contractors. During Q-and-A, CMS said the extension is scheduled to lapse beginning May 1, 2015. However, Marc Hartstein, Director of the CMS Hospital and Ambulatory Policy Group, also reminded providers that legislation that passed the House and is expected to be considered soon by the Senate would extend the audit moratorium through September 30, 2015, or the end of the current fiscal year. For more on the “Probe and Educate” program, see [http://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Monitoring-Programs/Medicare-FFS-Compliance-Programs/Medical-Review/InpatientHospitalReviews.html](http://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Monitoring-Programs/Medicare-FFS-Compliance-Programs/Medical-Review/InpatientHospitalReviews.html).

**Wage Index Redetermination** – CMS reminded hospitals that April 15, 2015 is the deadline for appealing a MAC determination on wage index and requesting the Agency to intervene. Providers who decide to appeal must include all correspondence with the MAC and must forward a copy with full documentation to the MAC as well. The complete request must be received by CMS by the deadline to be valid. For further information, see [http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Payment/AcuteInpatientPPS/Downloads/FY2016-WI-Time-Table-Final.pdf](http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Payment/AcuteInpatientPPS/Downloads/FY2016-WI-Time-Table-Final.pdf). CMS also said it will post initial FY2017 wage index by May 15, 2015.

**Open Payments Program** – CMS said that hospitals and physicians have 45 days beginning from April 6, 2015 to review and dispute payment data attributed to them by manufacturers under the Open Payments program before the data is made public. Questions may be submitted to the Hospital ODF mailbox at hospital_ODF@cms.hhs.gov. For more information on Open Payments, see [http://www.cms.gov/openpayments/](http://www.cms.gov/openpayments/).

**Lung Cancer Screening** – CMS noted that there was a recent National Coverage Determination approving annual low-dose CT scans for lung cancer for some Medicare beneficiaries. To be eligible, patients must be between 55 and 77 years of age, be a former smoker or have quit smoking in the past 15 years, have smoked an average of one pack of cigarettes a day for 30 years and have received a written order from a physician’s office. Imaging centers participating in the screening must belong to a CMS-approved registry. CMS said it more information will be forthcoming, including coding and manual instructions. For further information on the coverage determination, see [http://www.cms.gov/Newsroom/MediaReleaseDatabase/Press-releases/2015-Press-releases-items/2015-](http://www.cms.gov/Newsroom/MediaReleaseDatabase/Press-releases/2015-Press-releases-items/2015-).
For information on registries, see http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-General-Information/MedicareApprovedFacilitie/Lung-Cancer-Screening-Registries.html.

**Next Call: May 19th**

**Encore:** A recording of this call can be accessed by dialing 1-855-859-2056 and using Conference ID 12698288. The recording becomes available today and expires after two business days.

CMS also maintains an email mailbox for the ODF at hospital_ODF@cms.hhs.gov.