

AAFP gives context to CMS publication of Medicare payments

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(HealthDay)—In response to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) publication of Medicare payments to physicians, the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) has developed dedicated online resources to give context to these data.

The AAFP seeks to provide context for the newly released financial data for more than 880,000 health care professionals who received about \$77 billion in 2012 from the Medicare Part B fee-for-service program.

The AAFP [online resources](#) outline the Academy's policy on transparency and attempt to assist physicians in communicating with patients and the media regarding proper interpretation of the data. The resources also explain how the CMS site should be used. The data will highlight which physicians order more expensive medications or perform costly procedures, and will help patients to make more

informed decisions about choosing a physician. However, the data do not account for the severity or complexity of conditions handled during a visit and consequently cannot be used to measure the quality of care.

"The AAFP recognizes the potential value of Medicare physician claims data. If used correctly, it can potentially provide accurate and meaningful information to patients, physicians, and other stakeholders that could improve quality at the point of care," according to the new AAFP online resource.

More information: [Press Release](#)
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