

Charlene Frizzera
Acting Administrator
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
Hubert H. Humphrey Building
200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 445-G
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Ms. Frizzera:

We commend you for your leadership in championing the establishment of the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (Innovation Center) to test and develop new models to improve the delivery of health care through the use of technology and innovative care delivery models. The establishment of the Innovation Center is a crucial step to determine more effective ways to care for chronically ill, acute and non-acute patients and improve the quality, safety, and efficiency in the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

As the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) implements the provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PL 111-148), specifically the creation of the Innovation Center within CMS, we are writing to urge the Center to incorporate remote telehealth monitoring into the Innovation Center's demonstration project priorities. As you know, the statute specifically provides that "patient-based remote monitoring systems" be incorporated into the demonstration models.

It's commonly understood that individuals prefer to age in place, meaning they prefer to remain in their homes for as long as their health permits. Moving into an assisted care facility can greatly increase costs, both for individual patients and across the health care system.

By its nature, the use of technology to remotely monitor an individual's basic health vitals provides individuals with the flexibility and comfort of remaining in their home. Not only do the individuals and their family members have the comfort that remote monitoring can be used 24 hours a day, seven days a week, but using remote monitoring can help avert unnecessary and costly hospitalizations.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has used remote monitoring technology for veterans being cared for in their homes by home health care providers. The VA recently realized a 25 percent reduction in the number of bed days of care, a 19 percent reduction in hospital admissions, and an 86 percent satisfaction rate from veterans being treated in their home.

According to CMS, home health serviced nearly 3.4 million patients in 2007 through the Medicare fee-for-service program. Given the VA's success, we believe it's logical to extend these positive benefits from remote monitoring to home health care services provided through the Medicare program.

We fully expect that remote monitoring demonstration projects undertaken by the Innovation Center would provide the necessary data to demonstrate the savings that can be achieved through remote monitoring, through such actions as reduced hospitalizations and improved care coordination. We also expect that Medicare patient satisfaction will be every bit as high as the satisfaction rate reported by the VA.

As you formulate the Innovation's Center's demonstration project strategy, we urge you to include a remote telehealth monitoring demonstration project, such as that called for in legislation introduced in the Senate and House of Representatives, the Fostering Independence Through Technology Act of 2009 (S.457 ; HR3030), which combine home health care and remote monitoring.

Allowing individuals to remain in their homes longer using remote monitoring technology serves two positive objectives: it maintains the individual's choice of aging in place and provides demonstrated cost savings to the health care system. For these reasons, we urge that the Innovation Center place a top priority on establishing a remote monitoring demonstration project for home health.

We appreciate your consideration of this valuable remote monitoring demonstration project and look forward to working with you to improve the quality and efficiency of our health care system.

Sincerely,