

Coalition Concerned That Phase-In Will Not Mitigate Impact on Patient Access and Care Quality

WASHINGTON, Nov. 23, 2013 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The nation's kidney care leaders today expressed disappointment that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) decision to cut Medicare payments for dialysis by 12 percent – or nearly \$30 per treatment – over three to four years will have a negative impact on vulnerable dialysis patients by threatening access to and limiting options for quality care.

The final Medicare rule does not change CMS' original proposal, issued in July, which also includes additional cuts of 12 percent.

According to Kidney Care Partners (KCP), a coalition of patients, physicians, nurses, providers, and manufacturers, the rule deals a significant blow to an already fragile system by ultimately reducing Medicare payments to a level that will not cover the cost of care for individuals on dialysis.

"Phasing in this cut does not solve the problem," said KCP Chairman Ron Kuerbitz. "Instead, it only delays the inevitable harm that will come as a result of failing to cover the cost of care. Simply put, this model is unsustainable."

As a result of the rule, KCP said, providers and physicians will face difficult choices regarding staffing, facility hours, quality improvement interventions, and ultimately whether an entire facility can be kept open to service a community. In turn, Medicare beneficiaries could face reduced access to care.

"Our community worked with Congress to establish a sustainable bundled payment system," said Kuerbitz. "It is troubling that, as we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Medicare dialysis benefit, this rule appears to be a step backwards. We appreciate those in Congress on both

Nation's Kidney Care Community Says Medicare Rule Goes Too Far, Cuts Too Deep

Written by Australian Business

sides of the aisle who support their constituents living with kidney failure, and we will continue to work with them to ensure that these, and all Americans with kidney failure, have access to the highest quality care in the years to come."

Kidney Care Partners is a community-wide coalition of patient advocates, dialysis professionals, researchers, care providers and manufacturers dedicated to working together to improve quality of care for individuals with chronic kidney disease. To learn more, visit www.kidneycarepartners.com

SOURCE Kidney Care Partners

RELATED LINKS <http://www.kidneycarepartners.com>