



Michael D. Maves, MD, MBA, Executive Vice President, CEO

June 30, 2009

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

Re: Proposed Changes to the Hospital Inpatient Prospective Payment Systems and Fiscal Year 2010 Rates; 74 Fed. Reg. 24,080 (May 22, 2009).

Dear Acting Administrator Frizzera:

The American Medical Association (AMA) appreciates the opportunity to provide our comments regarding *Proposed Changes to the Hospital Inpatient Prospective Payment Systems for Acute Care Hospitals and Fiscal Year 2010 Rates and to the Long-Term Care Hospital Prospective Payment System and Rate Year 2010 Rates*; 74 Fed. Reg. 24,080 (May 22, 2009).

The AMA supports the agency's decision to not propose additional categories of Hospital Acquired Conditions (HACs) at this time. As articulated in previous comments, the AMA strongly opposes non-payment for HACs in the inpatient or in any payment setting that are not reasonably preventable through the application of evidence-based guidelines, developed by appropriate medical specialty organizations based on non-biased, well-designed, prospective, randomized studies. We remain concerned that some of the current inpatient HACs do not meet the above criteria, but are encouraged that the agency in partnership with the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will evaluate early HAC program data to inform maintenance of the HAC list and consideration of future potential candidate HACs. We urge that this program evaluation be done in consultation with technical experts, physician organizations, hospitals and other impacted providers.

The AMA appreciates your consideration of our comments and looks forward to working with CMS to achieve consensus on coverage policies that maintain Medicare beneficiary access and improve their quality of care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Maves", written in a cursive style.

Michael D. Maves, MD, MBA