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and Palliative Medicine
(AAHPM)

Association of
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Center to Advance
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(CAPC)

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Hospice and Palliative
Nurses Association
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National Hospice and
Palliative Care Organization
(NHPCO)

National Palliative
Care Research Center
(NPCRC)

Physician Assistants in Hospice
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(PAHPM)

Social Work Hospice &
Palliative Care Network
(SWHPN)

Society of Pain & Palliative
Care Pharmacists
(SPCP)

New HHS Primary Care First Model Released-Includes a Serious Illness 'Track'

April 23, 2019

The National Coalition for Hospice and Palliative Care is grateful to Secretary Azar, CMS Administrator Verma and CMMI Director Boehler for the opportunity to participate in yesterday's historic press conference to unveil new [Primary Care First Model Options](#). "Primary Care First is based on the underlying principles of the existing CPC+ model design: prioritizing the doctor-patient relationship; enhancing care for patients with complex chronic needs and high need, seriously ill patients, reducing administrative burden, and focusing financial rewards on improved health outcomes." During the press conference, our nation's health care leaders all praised the work of Coalition Member, American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine, their work on a [serious illness model](#) and the contribution of palliative care providers in general.

The Coalition is pleased that this new primary care model includes a Serious Illness Population (SIP) component that specifically welcomes the participation of hospice and palliative care providers. The Coalition and the Members of our Coalition congratulate HHS on this landmark step to improve the care of Medicare beneficiaries, and look forward to working with the Administration as more [details](#) emerge. Payment in these voluntary models (available in 26 states/regions only) will comprise a monthly per patient fee, as well some limited encounter payments and performance-based payments based on reducing hospitalization rates. CMS will be identifying eligible patients for participating programs based on comorbidities, past utilization, and a proxy for frailty. Certain components of this new model include essential elements of serious illness care that all Coalition Members have been advocating for and supporting as key components of patient and family centered care including:

- Patient eligibility criteria that are based on needs, not prognosis.
- Practices must ensure 24-hour coverage to ensure beneficiary access to care
- Care coordination/care management are essential
- Interdisciplinary care provided by certified hospice and palliative care practitioners

The Coalition is eager to better understand how these new models align with the principles outlined in this [letter](#)—signed by the entire Coalition membership and an additional 20+ organizations—that prioritize access to care in all communities, quality measurement that is meaningful to beneficiaries and caregivers, and reliable payment that supports interdisciplinary palliative and serious illness care. The Coalition and our Member organizations look forward to being actively involved with HHS in the stakeholder engagement process as the Primary Care First Models' rules and regulations continue to evolve.

Our Coalition leadership is committed to staying coordinated and working together as we learn more about these exciting new models that have been created to improve the care of Medicare beneficiaries with serious and chronic conditions.

Public webinars will be held on April 30th and May 16th. Register [here](#) (bottom of page).

- [CMS Fact Sheet](#)
- [CMS Press Release](#)
- [CMS Primary Cares Initiative One-Pager \(PDF\)](#)