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Healthcare Quality Watch

March 2020

IPRO Physician Executive Appointed to Federal Payment Panel

IPRO Senior Vice President and Chief Quality Officer Edison Machado, Jr, MD, MBA, has been chosen to participate on an expert panel advising the federal government on implementing cost measures under Medicare. The Physician Cost Measures and Patient Relationship Categories project is examining cost performance measure development and patient relationship coding as well as progress in creating episodes for reimbursing management of chronic diseases including diabetes and asthma. This project is a critical outgrowth of Medicare reform legislation (MACRA) originally passed in 2015. The expert panel is expected to meet twice annually through 2024.



Edison Machado, Jr, MD, MBA



physicians and insurers can't agree on a payment rate for out-of-network services. The bill in Energy and Commerce would use arbitration but would also rely on benchmarks to arrive at pricing decisions. The landmark 2006 New York "Surprise Billing" law protects insured hospital patients from out-of-network co-payments, coinsurance and deductibles larger than charges for comparable in-network ancillary emergency services. IPRO is one of the independent dispute resolution contractors in New York that adjudicates between plans and providers regarding the reasonableness of out-of-network billings.

Congress Mulls "Surprise Billing" Legislation

Despite long-standing interest in federal legislation protecting consumers from unexpected out-of-pocket expenses following hospitalization, Congressional Committees remain split on specific provisions aimed at addressing "surprise billing." Bills under consideration in the House Ways & Means and House Energy & Commerce Committees are intended to protect patients from surprise billings that can occur when lab tests, ancillary services and/or emergency services are provided by out-of-network physicians working at in-network hospitals. The bill now under discussion in Ways & Means would use mediation to arbitrate disputes when

IPRO Senior Manager Appointed to Patient Safety Committee

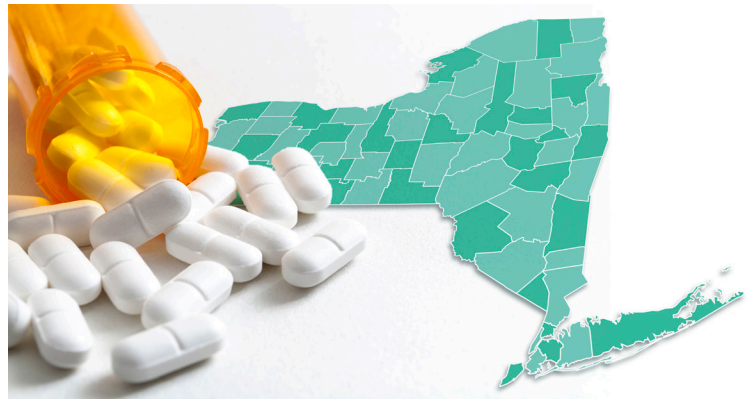
IPRO Director of Drug Safety, Anne Myrka, RPh, MAT, has been selected to serve on the National Quality Forum (NQF) Patient Safety Standing Committee. The committee oversees NQF's portfolio of patient safety measures which address medication safety, healthcare-associated infections, falls, pressure ulcers, and other safety concerns. Ms. Myrka is a practicing NY and VT licensed pharmacist with expertise in electronic clinical quality measures and opioid-related adverse events. In addition to leading IPRO's Drug Safety team, Ms. Myrka recently took on the role of IPRO's QIN-QIO program director for the state of Ohio. For more information regarding the NQF Patient Safety Standing Committee, please visit <http://www.qualityforum.org/Home.aspx>



Anne Myrka, RPh, MAT

Study Weighs Special Interventions for Severely Ill Patients

Special, coordinated post-hospital support services for severely ill patients don't seem to reduce the risk of re-hospitalization relative to patients receiving traditional post-hospital services, according to a new study by researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and published in *The New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM)*. The study examined 180-day readmission rates for 800 patients with complex conditions; the intervention group of patients received special post-discharge services from nurses, social workers and community health workers, while the control group received traditional follow-up services. The randomized controlled trial found hospital readmission rates of 62.3% and 61.7% respectively, with adjusted differences found not to be statistically significant. Researchers posit that "it is possible that approaches to care management that are designed to connect patients with existing resources are insufficient for these complex cases." This analysis of the "hotspotting program" developed by the Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers appears in the January 9 edition of NEJM. For more information, visit nejm.org.



New York Issues Latest County-Specific Data on Opioid Drug Use

New York has recently released quarterly, county-specific data on opioid drug use across the state, as mandated by 2016 legislation requiring highly-detailed drug data reports. The latest report includes statewide and county-level data on opioid overdoses, opioid prescribing and opioid use disorder treatment. The report provides overdose information including deaths, emergency room visits and hospitalizations arrayed by county. Reporting addresses prescription pain relievers such as hydrocodone, oxycodone and morphine as well as illegal drugs, including heroin and opium. The state's Opioid Data Dashboard tracks statewide data for 78 opioid related indicators and county-level data for 69 opioid related indicators. In addition, each county in the state has its own dashboard. For more information, visit <http://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/opioid>.

IPRO is a non-profit organization that works with government agencies, providers and consumers to implement innovative programs that bring policy ideas to life. For over 35 years we've made creative use of clinical expertise, emerging technology and data solutions to make the healthcare system work better.



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