



# HPCAIA Update

*Bi-weekly News for Hospice Professionals in Iowa*

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October 23, 2009

[Governor Announces Hospice Medicaid Reductions](#)

[HPCAIA Gathering Data to Oppose State Medicaid Hospice Cut](#)

[Fall Conference Just Days Away](#)

[Health Care Reform Bill Passes Finance Committee and Begins Merge](#)

[Annual Update of Hospice Rates](#)

[CMS Region VII Conference Call](#)

[Free Palliative Care CD Available for Iowa Hospices](#)

[HPCAIA Calendar](#)

## **Governor Announces Hospice Medicaid Reductions**

Due to declining state revenues, Governor Culver recently announced an across-the-board 10 percent reduction in all state spending. Each department released details regarding implementation of these cuts on October 21. Included in the plan from the Department of Human Services (DHS) is a five percent Medicaid payment reduction for Medicaid providers effective December 1.

This reduction will affect hospice Medicaid providers statewide by nearly \$1 million. While the five percent hospice reduction saves the state \$274,000, hospice payments will also lose more than \$700,000 in corresponding federal Medicaid funds.

The cuts affect virtually all Medicaid providers including hospital inpatient and outpatient payments, physicians, nursing homes, home health services and many other programs. All told, the five percent Medicaid provider reduction will save the state \$15.5 million. However, when the impact of federal funds is added into the equation, Medicaid providers will see actual cuts of \$55.5 million.

A spreadsheet from DHS detailing all the provider cuts is an attachment to this *Update*.

DHS also used \$53 million of anticipated FY 2010 Medicaid surplus dollars to offset even greater cuts to the Medicaid program. However, the department has retained approximately \$20 million in Medicaid budget surplus dollars for use in the FY 2011 budget.

These cuts represent a preliminary action plan, with final action from the Governor to follow next week. HPCAIA is urging the Governor's office to utilize additional Medicaid surplus dollars to minimize the immediate impact of these cuts. While the cuts aren't scheduled to take effect until December 1, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will

also have to approve any Medicaid reductions.

[Top](#)

## **HPCAI Gathering Data to Oppose State Medicaid Hospice Cut**

The Hospice & Palliative Care of Association of Iowa intends to fight for the preservation of the hospice Medicaid benefit but needs data to do so. Please take the time to complete this brief survey on the demographics of your hospice. If you already participate in the NHPCO Data Set, you will find some of the same data requested in this survey.

Please complete the survey by **November 16**. If you have any problems with the online survey, please contact HPCAI. A paper copy is also attached to this *Update* that can be completed and mailed to HPCAI.

This has never been more important for state advocacy than it is today! Make a commitment to provide your agency's data. All submitted data is confidential; only aggregate data will be utilized with lawmakers and other constituents to paint the picture of hospice care in Iowa and why adequate funding of hospice care is critical to patients and families.

[HPCAI Data Survey 2009](#)

[Top](#)

## **Fall Conference Just Days Away**

### **Registration**

Online registration for the Fall Conference has closed. If you missed registering for the conference, onsite registration will be available.

### **Handouts**

Again this year, all Pre-Conference and Fall Conference handouts are available for pre-printing on the [HPCAI web site](#). Be sure to check the web site now and print any handouts you wish to have with you at the Conference.

### **Pre-Conference Workshop**

The Pre-Conference Workshop will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, October 27 at the Gateway Hotel and Conference Center in Ames.

Joy Barry, principal, Weatherbee Resources, will lead a day-long intensive workshop reviewing the challenging landscape of hospice scrutiny with a focus on what hospice leadership needs to know and do to operate a compliant, high-quality hospice program. Going beyond regulations and looking through the lens of payment scrutiny, how can hospice leadership engage a holistic, mission-driven Interdisciplinary Group (IDG) to participate in the challenge of doing what is required in order to get paid while retaining what is essential about patient-driven end-of-life care.

Onsite registration is available for the Pre-Conference Workshop beginning at 8:00 a.m.

### **Volunteer Recognition Ceremony**

The Recognition Ceremony is again being held in conjunction with lunch this year. The event will be held on Thursday, October 29 at Hilton Coliseum, right next door to the Scheman Building where the Fall Conference is held. The building is easily handicapped accessible, with ramps up to the door and an elevator just inside the door. Parking will be available in the lot just south of Hilton.

Those who are attending only the Ceremony and Luncheon will be able to pick up their name badge at

Hilton, saving a walk into Scheman.

If you have any questions regarding the 2009 HPCAI Fall Conference, please contact [Stacey Nay](#) at 515-243-1046.

[Top](#)

## **Health Care Reform Bill Passes Finance Committee and Begins Merge**

Senate Finance Committee Chair Max Baucus (D-MT), with the support of a lone Republican, Sen. Olympia Snowe (R-ME), was able to declare “bipartisan” passage of [S.1796 \(summary\)](#) America’s Healthy Future Act of 2009, through the committee last week. Snowe’s ongoing support, however, is uncertain as she signaled her floor vote will depend on how Democratic leaders merge the Finance bill with the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee’s bill.

Of the five Congressional committees in both chambers working on health care reform legislation, Snowe represents the only Republican “yes” vote and has made clear that her support will continue should her, and, very likely, her leadership’s key objectives be met.

This week, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) began the bill-merging process by arranging closed-door meetings with leaders from the Finance committee, HELP committee, chaired by Iowa Senator Tom Harkin (D) along with White House aides.

The public insurance option/co-op proposal and individual/employer coverage mandates top the list of contentious issues remaining and both bills contain mixed proposals and methodologies concerning each.

Both committees are expected to complete the merger this week and then send the results off to the Congressional Budget Office to score the entire package as a whole. Senate floor action is likely to occur the first week in November. Meanwhile, the House continues to work on merging its three committee bills into one package and intends on taking action following the Senate floor vote.

[Top](#)

## **Annual Update of Hospice Rates**

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has published its annual update of Hospice rates. Please see the attached *Information Release No. 844* for details.

[Top](#)

## **CMS Region VII Conference Call**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services’ Kansas City Regional Office invites you to participate in our *Region VII Provider and Partner Call* on October 27, 2009 from 1:00 pm to 3:00 p.m. The call will feature a brief RAC overview, program update, and extended Q&A session facilitated by CMS subject matter experts.

Attached are the handouts for the call. You do not need to register and the call in information is below.

Call in #: 877-267-1577

Participant PIN Code: 148110

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Jacqui Stanard at 816-426-

6405 or by e-mail at [jacquelyn.stanard@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:jacquelyn.stanard@cms.hhs.gov)

[Top](#)

## Free Palliative Care CD Available for Iowa Hospices

The Patient and Family Resources Group of The Iowa Consortium for Comprehensive Cancer Control (ICCCC) has developed a palliative care DVD and fact sheet to educate patients, families and staff about palliative care and how it improves quality of life.

The production of this DVD was made possible by KDSM Fox 17 and the ICCCC. Each HPCAI member hospice can pick up the DVD at the HPCAI Fall Conference Registration Desk. Additional copies are available free of charge through the ICCCC at 1-800-237-1225 or [info@canceriowa.org](mailto:info@canceriowa.org).

*The ICCCC was formed in 2001 and has developed a statewide comprehensive cancer control plan that provides the framework for what needs to be done to change the impact cancer has in Iowa. Represented on the Consortium are more than 170 individuals representing some 50 entities, including researchers, legislators, insurance companies, health care providers, genetics, faith-based organizations, hospice, pharmaceutical companies, cancer centers, cancer survivors, health systems, voluntary health organizations, state and local public health agencies, schools, and a variety of other agencies with interest in cancer control. To learn more and how you can become a member, visit [www.canceriowa.org](http://www.canceriowa.org).*

[Top](#)

## HPCAI Calendar

- **October 27**  
**HPCAI Fall Pre-Conference, Gateway Hotel and Conference Center, Ames**
- **October 28 – 29**  
**HPCAI Fall Conference, Scheman Building, Ames**
- **November 5**  
**District 3 Meeting, Cedar Valley Hospice, Independence**
- **December 1, 1:00 pm**  
**OCS/HPCAI QAPI Snapshot Webinar, Registration will be available in November**

To add items to the HPCAI Calendar, send information to [Stacey Nay](#).

[Top](#)