eHealth

Medicare Reimbursement Restrictions for Physician-Owned Hospitals: PlanPrescriber Offers Advice for Patients

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MAYNARD, MA, Aug 24, 2010 (MARKETWIRE via COMTEX) --

A provision in the Patient Protection Affordable Care Act of 2010 places limits on physician-owned hospitals with immediate restrictions on expansion for existing hospitals. The Act also requires that new doctor-owned facilities be certified by December 31, 2010 in order to participate in Medicare. Today PlanPrescriber (www.planprescriber.com), a wholly-owned subsidiary of eHealth, Inc. (NASDAQ: EHTH) offered tips for Medicare patients affected by this new requirement.

Currently, there are approximately 265 existing physician-owned hospitals in the United States, and an estimated 29 new physician-owned hospitals are expected to open by the December deadline. As a result, a significant number of Medicare patients could be affected by the new provision. Patients need to know how to protect themselves from increased healthcare costs, make sure they still have appropriate health insurance coverage, and investigate their healthcare provider options.

Tips for Medicare Patients

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--  Check to see if your hospital is physician-owned: The best way to find
    out if your hospital is physician-owned is to contact your hospital
    directly. You can also check online at
    http://media.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/nation/documents/Hospitals_Reviewed.pdf
    for a partial list of physician-owned hospitals in the United States.
--  Call ahead: Before you begin making new appointments, it's a good idea
    to contact your hospital and find out whether this new provision will
    affect you. Continue to check in with the hospital periodically to
    make sure to stay abreast of any changes in costs or procedures.
--  Protect your wallet: Compare Medicare Advantage and Medicare
    Supplement insurance providers to make sure that your current hospital
    is still within your network in 2011 if you're covered by Original
    Medicare or have a Medicare Advantage HMO plan. To compare Medicare
    Advantage and Medicare Supplement insurance plans go to
    PlanPrescriber.com.
--  Get a second opinion: Get a second opinion when selecting your primary
    care doctor or a specialist. Consult trusted sources, check doctor
    reviews online, and ask friends and family for their recommendations
    when selecting a hospital, regardless of whether it is
    physician-owned.
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About PlanPrescriber.com PlanPrescriber (www.planprescriber.com), a wholly-owned subsidiary of eHealth, Inc., is the leading provider of unbiased comparison tools and educational materials for Medicare Advantage, Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plans, and Medicare Supplement insurance products. Seniors can take advantage of PlanPrescriber's free online advisor tools by logging on to www.planprescriber.com, or by navigating to the Medicare sections of national pharmacy chain web sites, including Wal-Mart, Rite Aid, Kroger and others. PlanPrescriber help's Medicare recipients find a Medicare plan that covers their specific medical and prescription drug needs at the lowest possible out-of-pocket cost.

About eHealth eHealth, Inc. (NASDAQ: EHTH) is the parent company of eHealthInsurance, the nation's leading online source of health insurance for individuals, families and small businesses. Through the company's website, www.eHealthInsurance.com, consumers can get quotes from leading health insurance carriers, compare plans side by side, and apply for and purchase health insurance. eHealthInsurance offers thousands of health plans underwritten by more than 180 of the nation's leading health insurance companies. eHealthInsurance is licensed to sell health insurance in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, making it the ideal model of a successful, high-functioning health insurance exchange. Through its eCommerce On-Demand solution (www.eHealth.com/eOD), eHealth is also a leading provider of on-demand e-commerce software. eHealth's eOD platform provides a suite of hosted solutions that enable health plan providers and resellers to market and distribute products online. eHealth, Inc. also provides powerful online and pharmacy-based tools to help seniors navigate Medicare health insurance options and choose the right plan through its wholly-owned subsidiary, PlanPrescriber.com (http://www.planprescriber.com).

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