



## Maryland Says "Been There, Done That" to Federal Requirement to Track Hospital Quality

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MarylandReporter.com reports that the state will **request an exemption** from a new requirement by Medicare that hospitals demonstrate their quality of care. Taking effect Oct. 1, the requirement financially rewards hospitals that meet the new standard and penalizes those that don't.

Robert Murray, executive director of the Health Services Cost Review Commission, said the state will document for the feds that "Maryland already has those programs in our system." The commission has tracked the quality of hospital care for three years.

"The health reform act says you can be exempt from this regulation if you show you already meet or exceed [the national requirement]," Murray said.

Maryland is the only state in the country with a waiver from the Medicare payment methodology, which was negotiated in 1977 when Medicare agreed to pay hospitals in Maryland on the basis of

commission-set rates. Other states since have been granted waivers but only Maryland has maintained its waiver.

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