

Health Headlines

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HHS Releases Update of Regulatory Reform

HHS recently published a statement describing progress made by its agencies in reviewing and modifying existing regulations and the department's plans to review additional regulations. This project came in response to President Obama's January 2011 executive order instructing agencies to periodically review existing regulations for efficiency, burden on stakeholders, and continued necessity. HHS stated that it had published eight proposed rules and nine final rules from its initial plan for review submitted in August 2011. HHS anticipates publishing four additional proposed rules and three final rules during the first quarter of 2012.

In its statement, HHS estimated that two recent proposed rules directly affecting the health industry, including modifications to the hospital conditions of participation, would save over \$5 billion over a five-year period. Additional rule modifications will seek to improve fiscal relief to states, provide patients with easier access to their own health care information, and make changes to the HIPAA Privacy Rule's notice distribution requirements.

The update identified 40 changes to CMS rules that are in the regulatory review process, as well as more than 20 potential changes to FDA regulations, including anticipated revisions to the Common Rule for the first time in 20 years.

The HHS plan for retrospective regulatory review is available [here](#). The January 2012 update is available [here](#).

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