



**To:** Members, AHA's Section for Psychiatric & Substance Abuse Services  
**From:** Rebecca B. Chickey, Director, AHA's Section for Psychiatric & Substance Abuse Services  
**Subject:** **Update on Key Issues in the Behavioral Health Care Field: March 2014**

### **AHA Guide on Integrating Behavioral Health**

[Integrating Behavioral Health Across the Continuum of Care](#): is a new [guide](#) launched by AHA's Hospitals in Pursuit of Excellence (HPOE). The guide explains the value of integrating physical and behavioral health services and the importance of measuring integration efforts. It offers several frameworks and models to use for behavioral health integration and provides a list of strategic questions for hospital and care system leaders to begin integrating behavioral health or to enhance current efforts. The guide was developed in collaboration with [AHA's Section for Psychiatric and Substance Abuse Services](#). The guide is free.



### **AHA Legislative Update**

#### Congressional Leaders Unveil SGR Replacement Bill

With the nation's debt ceiling now raised for the next year, attention is sharply focused on March 31, the date the latest Medicare physician payment fix expires. Congressional leaders have unveiled [legislation](#) to fix the recurring physician payment problem by repealing the sustainable growth rate (SGR) formula. The *SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act*, [H.R. 4015](#), includes a 0.5 percent payment update for five years under the fee-for-service model as a transition, and also a provision to allow for further updates, if needed. However, the bill, which has not been scored by the Congressional Budget Office, does not include recommendations on how to offset the costs. AHA's [Special Bulletin](#) H.R. 4015 provides details on the bill.

Hospital payments remain at serious risk. We've scheduled a series of [Advocacy Days](#) in March to urge lawmakers not to use critical funding for hospitals to pay for the SGR fix and to promote other items on our [Legislative Advocacy Agenda](#). The Coalition to Protect America's Health Care, of which AHA is a member, is expanding its work via social media to fight potential cuts. Check out the Piggybank [graphic](#) which has been posted on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). [Join our community](#) of more than 430,000 and growing.

[White House proposes more than \\$400 billion in Medicare, Medicaid reductions](#): President Obama released a fiscal year 2015 [budget request](#) that includes \$407 billion in proposed reductions to Medicare, of which \$354 billion would come from health care providers, along with \$7.3 billion in reductions to Medicaid. For details on the proposed cuts, read AHA's [Special Bulletin](#).

[Senate Finance leaders issue summary of mental health recommendations](#): Leaders of the Senate Finance Committee have issued a [summary](#) of recommendations received in response to their August

request to stakeholders for ways to improve the nation's behavioral health care system. "The recommendations that were received by the Senate Finance Committee are an important resource for the Committee to use to improve the quality of mental and behavioral health services provided through Medicare and Medicaid," the document concludes. AHA submitted recommendations in September.

### **AHA Regulatory Update**

Next IPFQR Webinar: The next one-hour webinar for participants in the Inpatient Psychiatric Facility Quality Reporting (IPFQR) program is scheduled for Thursday, March 13, at 1pm Eastern. The presentation is targeted to facility leaders, professional staff, and quality improvement coordinators. The webinar will address obtaining a *QualityNet* account; logging into the *HCQIS QualityNet Secure Portal*; using the Secure File Transfer; and using the "Q &A" section of *QualityNet*. Details will be provided soon to the IPFQR listserv and posted to [www.qualitynet.org](http://www.qualitynet.org)

HIPAA and Mental Health: The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has released new guidance explaining how the *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability* (HIPAA) Privacy Rule operates to protect individuals' privacy rights with respect to their mental health information and in what circumstances HIPAA permits healthcare providers to communicate with patients' family members and others to enhance treatment and assure safety. The guidance addresses frequently asked questions about when it is appropriate under the privacy rule for a healthcare provider to share the protected health information of a patient who is being treated for a mental health condition.

Same-Day Billing Guidance: A Medicare Learning Network (MLN) Matters article on "Mental Health Services" has helpful information on Medicare's same-day billing guidelines for mental health services including treatment for substance use. It clarifies that regardless of whether a patient is receiving care in a traditional primary care setting or a specialty or substance use healthcare setting, Medicare Part B pays for reasonable and necessary integrated healthcare services when they are furnished on the same day to the same patient by the same eligible professional or a different professional.

Provider Network Requirements for Federal Marketplace Plans: The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a draft letter to insurers describing proposed 2015 certification requirements for Qualified Health Plans (QHPs) in federally facilitated marketplaces or Small Business Health Options Program under the *Affordable Care Act* (ACA). The letter says QHPs with provider networks must maintain a network that is sufficient in number and types of providers, including those providing mental health and substance abuse services, so all services will be accessible to enrollees without unreasonable delay.

CMS Posts Additional Guidance on Two-midnight Policy, Audits: CMS posted additional guidance regarding its two-midnight policy and related Probe & Educate audits. Specifically, CMS said it will require Medicare Administrative Contractors to re-review all claims denied to date under the Probe & Educate process to ensure that the decisions and subsequent education were consistent with the agency's clarifications on Jan. 30. See the AHA Special Bulletin for additional information.

### **New Resources from AHA**

Governance Tools for Health Care Transformation: AHA's Center for Healthcare Governance has three new tools to help hospital and health system boards guide their organizations through the significant changes underway in health care payment and delivery. Based on the Center's 2012 Blue Ribbon Panel report "Governance Practices for an Era of Health Care Transformation," the tools include a free Readiness Assessment, which can be downloaded or completed online to help boards compare their

current practices with the key practices for transformation identified in the report. For more information on Center resources email [info@americangovernance.com](mailto:info@americangovernance.com) or call (888) 540-6111.

Improving Care & Saving Millions: More than 1,500 hospitals, including 41 psychiatric hospitals, participating in the AHA's Health Research & Educational Trust ([HRET](#)) Hospital Engagement Network ([HEN](#)) improved care for more than 69,000 patients over the past two years while reducing health care costs by nearly \$202 million, according to an annual report released Wednesday by the network. Among other improvements, participating hospitals reduced avoidable readmissions for heart failure patients by 13%. The program is part of the [CMS' Partnership for Patients initiative](#).

### **AHA Conference Calls & Webinars**

<b>Call Topic</b>	<b>Date/Time</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Registration</b>
<i>Hospitals Building Healthier Communities: Investing Outside Institutional Walls</i>	March 19, 2014  3:00-4:00 p.m. ET	This webinar, in collaboration with the <a href="#">Association for Community Health Improvement</a> , brings together practitioners from three health systems leading the way in implementing inclusive economic development and investment strategies to create healthier communities.	This webinar is available free of charge but advanced registration is required. To register <a href="#">click here</a>
<i>Leadership Skills and Competencies for the Future Health Care Environment</i>	April 1, 2014  1:00 - 2:00 p.m. ET	This webinar, will provide participants with an understanding of how leading health care executives are building and refining their leadership teams for the future health care environment, how they are addressing gaps and developing new competencies through recruiting and training.	This webinar is available free of charge but advanced registration is required. To register <a href="#">click here</a>
<i>Your Hospital's Path to the Second Curve: Integration and Transformation Webinar</i>	April 16, 2014  2:00-3:00 p.m. ET	The health care industry is shifting from volume- to value-based payment and care delivery models. This webinar offers leadership strategies to navigate the new health care environment. It will highlight some of the <a href="#">transformational paths</a> that hospitals have considered so that leaders can set realistic and manageable expectations when considering organizational change.	This webinar is available free of charge but advanced registration is required. To register <a href="#">click here</a> .
<i>Key Principles and Characteristics of an Effective Hospital Medicine Group</i>	April 17, 2014  3:00-4:00	What makes a hospital medicine group (HMG) effective? How can your hospitalists improve their performance? For the first time ever, new guidelines	This webinar is available free of charge but advanced

	p.m. ET	from the experts in the field can help hospital executives and HMGs evaluate their performance.	registration is required. To register <a href="#">click here.</a>
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Community Service Award: The Foster G. McGaw Prize for Excellence in Community Service honors health delivery organizations that have demonstrated exceptional commitment to community service. The simple act of applying for the Prize demonstrates your commitment to your community as well as an eagerness to share your organization’s experience and expertise in community service. The distinct honor of winning the Prize exhibits remarkable standards to which others will aspire. For information or an application, call 312/422-3932 or visit [www.aha.org/foster](http://www.aha.org/foster). The deadline for applying is April 4, 2014.

The March Behavioral Health Update includes, among other items, a fact sheet on the Transition to ICD-10: What It Entails and Why It’s Important to Behavioral Health Providers, the Atlas of Integrated Behavioral Health Care Quality Measures; and more. As always, for additional resources, such as the [scientific statement](#) by the American Heart Association that depression is a risk factor for heart disease, or the Center for Health Care Strategies’ [report](#) on state efforts to integrate physical and behavioral services for Medicare & Medicaid patients, go to the Section’s website at [www.aha.org/psych](http://www.aha.org/psych).

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