

Bundling of Dialysis Costs

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) pays for dialysis under what is deemed a composite rate. Certain dialysis related drugs (such as ESA's) are not included within the composite rate and are, therefore, billed separately. Recent discussions have centered on whether the costs of dialysis services and the cost of all dialysis drugs should be "bundled" together and providers paid one fee for all services and drugs provided.

Regardless of the method of reimbursement, patients should continue to receive the treatments and medications as prescribed by their doctors. DPC believes that there must also be a mechanism to ensure that there is an annual update to pay for the increased costs of dialysis. In addition, decision makers should consider patient input and evaluate the effects any changes to the reimbursement policy will have on dialysis patients' quality of care and quality of life.