

## **ACCOUNTABLE CARE ORGANIZATION REGULATIONS: COMMENT PERIOD ENDS AND CHANGES EXPECTED**

The comment period for interested parties to express their opinions on the proposed accountable care organization regulations ended on June 6<sup>th</sup>. The purpose of ACOs, as reflected in the Medicare Shared Savings Program, is to manage the care of a designated population of Medicare beneficiaries in a comprehensive manner, and to allow the ACO participants to share in any cost savings they may generate.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) received numerous comments from, among others, the major hospital and physician trade associations questioning the proposed regulations on the basis that the ACOs are too complicated and expensive to set up and the prospect of achieving any real cost savings is remote. Even many of the cutting edge health care organizations, such as the Mayo Clinic, on which the ACO regulations were modeled have indicated that, as the regulations currently stand, they would not be interested in setting up their own ACOs.

Accordingly, it is expected that there may be significant modifications in the ACO regulations before they are issued in final form by CMS later this year. ■

*Please contact Joshua S. Levine, Esq., with any questions about ACOs.*

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