List of Subjects in 30 CFR Part 250

Continental shelf, Environmental impact statements, Environmental protection, Government contracts, Incorporation by reference, Investigations, Mineral royalties, Oil and gas development and production, Oil and gas exploration, Oil and gas reserves, Penalties, Pipelines, Public lands—mineral resources, Public lands—rights-of-way, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Sulphur development and production, Sulphur exploration, Surety bonds.

Dated: June 7, 2000.

Sylvia V. Baca,
Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management.

For the reasons stated in the preamble, MMS amends 30 CFR Part 250 as follows:

PART 250—OIL AND GAS AND SULPHUR OPERATIONS IN THE OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF

1. The authority citation for part 250 continues to read as follows:


2. In §250.198, in the table in paragraph (e), add the following in alpha-numerical order:

§250.198 Documents incorporated by reference.

* * * * *

(e) * * * *

* * * * *

Title of documents


DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of the Secretary

32 CFR Part 199

TRICARE; Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS); Bonus Payments in Medically Underserved Areas

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary, DoD.

ACTION: Interim final rule.

SUMMARY: This interim final rule implements a bonus payment, in addition to the amount normally paid under the allowable charge methodology, to providers in medically underserved areas. For purposes of this rule, medically underserved areas are the same as those determined by the Secretary of Health and Human Services for the Medicare program. Such bonus payments shall be equal to the bonus payments authorized by Medicare, except as necessary to recognize any unique or distinct characteristics or requirements of the CHAMPUS program, and as described in instructions issued by the Director, OCHAMPUS. Due to the urgency for such bonus payments in medically underserved areas to alleviate problems of access to healthcare coverage caused by lower payments, the interim final rule making process has been utilized. This rule promotes a reimbursement enhancement to a limited number of providers designed to increase CHAMPUS beneficiary access to care, which also supports the use of the interim final rule.

DATES: This rule is effective August 2, 2000. Written comments will be accepted until September 1, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Forward comments to Medical Benefits and Reimbursement Systems, TRICARE Management Activity, 16401 East Centretech Parkway, Aurora, CO 80011–9043.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Stan Regensberg, Medical Benefits and Reimbursement Systems, TRICARE Management Activity, telephone (303) 676–3742.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: 32 CFR Part 199, “Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS),” was published in the Federal Register on July 1, 1986. This interim final rule implements a bonus payment, in addition to the amount normally paid under the allowable charge methodology, to providers in medically underserved areas. For purposes of this rule, medically underserved areas are the same as those determined by the Secretary of Health and Human Services for the Medicare program. Such bonus payments shall be equal to the bonus payments authorized by Medicare, except as necessary to recognize any unique or distinct characteristics or requirements of the CHAMPUS program, and as described in instructions issued by the Director, OCHAMPUS. If the Department of Health and Human Services acts to amend or remove the provision for bonus payments under Medicare, CHAMPUS likewise may follow Medicare in amending or removing provision for such payments. To expedite access to healthcare coverage that has been impacted by lower payments in such medically underserved areas, the interim final rule process is being utilized. Additionally, it provides a reimbursement enhancement that favors providers in underserved areas, thus alleviating healthcare access problems experienced by beneficiaries residing in such areas. Finally, because Medicare previously established a bonus payment reimbursement mechanism in these areas, our emulation of this well established mechanism complies with existing statutory mandates that CHAMPUS follow Medicare reimbursement policy wherever practicable. This rule will not unilaterally increase payments to all providers, but just those residing in these underserved areas. Due to the urgency for additional payments to ensure beneficiary access to care in these areas, it would be impracticable and contrary to the public’s interest not to use the interim final rule process. To do otherwise would prevent OCHAMPUS from fulfilling its duty to beneficiaries in these underserved areas.

Regulatory Procedure

Executive Order 12866 requires certain regulatory assessments for any significant regulatory action, defined as one which would result in an annual effect on the economy of $100 million or more, or have other substantial impacts. The Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) requires that each Federal agency prepare, and make available for public