



Administrator

Washington, DC 20201

MAY 30 2017

The Honorable Pete Sessions
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Sessions:

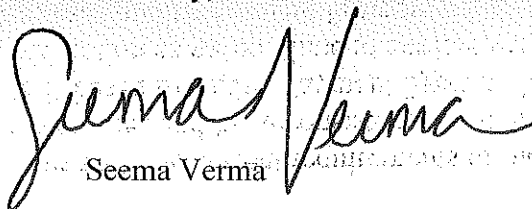
Thank you for your letter to Secretary Price about the Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS) quality reporting requirements and payment adjustments. He asked me to respond directly to you. As we transition to new policies under the Quality Payment Program, a clear and focused goal is to reduce reporting burden, in particular for small group practices and solo practices.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is still operating under the PQRS policies that were finalized most recently last year in the CY 2017 Physician Fee Schedule final rule, in accordance with the statutory requirements. Therefore, the established CMS reporting requirements for the last year of the PQRS program (the 2016 PQRS reporting period and corresponding 2018 payment adjustments) still apply.

Your letter points out a number of concerns with the current requirements of the PQRS program, including the requirement to report nine measures and the inconsistency of this reporting requirement with the first year of the Merit-based Incentive Payment System. We are examining these issues and will take them into consideration as we continue to explore ways to reduce clinician burden. During this first year of the Quality Payment Program, CMS is committed to diligently working with clinicians to streamline the reporting process as much as possible. Our goal is to further reduce burdensome requirements so that all clinicians can deliver the best possible care to patients. We hope that the Quality Payment Program will provide new opportunities to improve care delivery by supporting and rewarding clinicians as well as providing useful and valuable feedback.

We look forward to working with you in the future on this and other important Medicare issues. We will also provide a copy of this response to the co-signers of your letter.

Sincerely,


Seema Verma