

IMPORTANT CHANGES TO MEDICARE RULES ON INPATIENT ADMISSIONS as of 10/1/2013

- CMS has released a new regulation changing what is considered an “Inpatient Admission”
- For now, only Medicare patients will be affected
- These changes will mostly apply to medical, and not surgical admissions
- **This is a TIME-BASED inpatient definition of 2-MIDNIGHT EXPECTATION OF HOSPITAL CARE**

CMS now requires an inpatient admission to meet the following criteria:

- Admission order MUST state: “**Admit as Inpatient**”, not “admit to 4W” or “admit to Dr. X”
- Physician’s **documented expectation that hospital care will extend beyond 2 midnights**
- Documented **need for inpatient admission on H&P**, along with **continued documentation on the daily progress notes for continued stay**

Important points

- **All time spent in the hospital, including ED time and any Observation status** before formal inpatient admission **can now be considered** for the purpose of meeting 2-midnight benchmark
- Surgical admissions would still be governed by the CMS Inpatient-only procedure list
- Placements to SNF would still require a 3-day qualifying inpatient stay
- **Patients in Observation status will need to be triaged before 2nd midnight:**
 - DC- if appropriate
 - Converted to inpatient - if documented continued need for hospital-level care
 - There should be no more Observation stays spanning more than 2 midnights