

Medicare fines over hospitals' readmitted patients

September 30 2012, by Ricardo Alonso-zaldivar

(AP)—Medicare is changing the way it does business with hospitals and the result could be fewer patients going back into the hospital after they were discharged.

As of Monday, Medicare starts imposing financial penalties on hospitals that have too many patients readmitted within 30 days of discharge because of complications.

The government estimates that about two-thirds of hospitals serving [Medicare patients](#)—some 2,200 facilities nationally—will be hit with penalties averaging around \$125,000 per facility this coming year.

[Medicare](#) plans to post details online later in October. Consumers will be able to look up how their [community hospitals](#) performed.

Hospitals have scrambled to prepare for well over a year. They're working on ways to improve communication with rehab centers and doctors in their communities.

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Citation: Medicare fines over hospitals' readmitted patients (2012, September 30) retrieved 10 February 2023 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-09-medicare-fines-hospitals-readmitted-patients.html>

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