



EVALUATING MEDICARE DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

Demonstration projects allow the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to test and measure the likely effects of potential program changes, including new methods of service delivery, coverage for new types of services, and new payment approaches. RAND works closely with CMS to design, test, implement, and evaluate demonstration projects that span a wide range of care settings and issues.



RAND is investigating a way to reduce orders for inappropriate advanced imaging procedures.

Reducing the inappropriate use of expensive procedures, such as advanced diagnostic imaging, is critical to Medicare's efforts to promote high-value care. RAND researchers are evaluating a demonstration project designed to determine whether a new computer-based decision support system is a viable tool for curbing inappropriate ordering of advanced imaging procedures. If effective, the tool may also be more acceptable to providers and patients and less costly for CMS, compared with formal utilization review programs.



RAND studied barriers to recruiting and retaining the workforce that cares for those who need help with daily activities.

Direct service workers provide personal care or nonmedical services to Medicare beneficiaries and others who need assistance with daily activities. The job is physically and emotionally demanding, and attracting a stable and sufficiently trained pool of workers without raising pay has proven difficult. RAND researchers evaluated the impact of several CMS demonstration projects intended to improve the recruitment and retention of these workers, finding that programs that provided realistic job previews and addressed worker perceptions that their labor is undervalued were well received by the workers and were able to reduce turnover.



RAND is exploring the effects of a patient-centered medical home model designed to improve quality of care, promote better health, and lower costs.

Federally Qualified Health Centers are safety-net facilities that deliver care to Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries and other populations, primarily those with lower incomes. A CMS demonstration project is testing the effects of implementing a new patient-centered medical home model that includes providing primary care practices with incentives and technical assistance, such as open scheduling and the use of health information technology to coordinate care. RAND researchers are studying the challenges involved in the transformation and are assessing how the changes may affect access to care, quality, and cost.



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