



What is the Quality Payment Program?

The Quality Payment Program (QPP) is the performance-based payment program for certain clinicians reimbursed under Medicare Part B. The QPP is administered under two tracks:

Advanced Alternative Payment Programs (APMs)

Clinicians in APMs such as certain Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) work within approved systems of quality reporting and improvement. These APMs are permitted some independence in its performance management.

Merit-Based Incentive Payment Programs (MIPS)

MIPS affects clinicians not in APMs, including those on the following list.

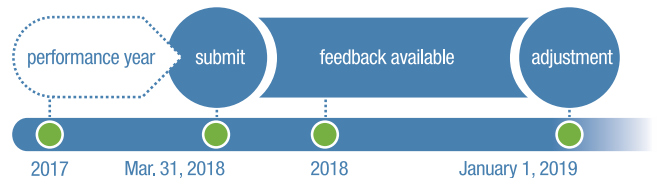
- Physicians
- Physician assistants
- Nurse practitioners
- Clinical nurse specialists
- Certified registered nurse anesthetists.

How does this impact my rural practice?

Under the QPP clinician payment rates can be reduced in calendar year 2019 by as much as 5% or increased by as much as 4%, based upon overall performance. Different adjustment rates are planned to be used in 2020 through 2022, with high performing clinicians gaining payment incentives of up to 9%. Separate incentive payment levels are set for clinicians participating in APMs versus those participating under MIPS.

2019 payment adjustments will be based upon performance reporting provided by clinicians for calendar year 2017. Payment adjustments for 2020 will be based on reporting provided by clinicians in 2018. QPP permits alternative ways for clinicians to report in 2017, allowing alternative reporting periods to be covered. There are various proposals before Congress for modifying the implementation dates for QPP — with special attention given to the reporting and payment adjustment dates of MIPS.

While services provided by eligible clinicians as part of Federally Qualified Health Center, Rural Health Clinic and most Critical Access Hospital payment mechanisms are exempt from QPP performance-based adjustments, it's important to consider the benefits of participation. In addition, clinicians who operate below the CMS designated thresholds for billing Medicare Part B or patient volume could be exempt from participation. It is important to note that exemption from payment adjustments may not exempt clinicians from reporting requirements. For more information related to exemptions, check the CMS small and rural [website](#).



CMS, QPP Website June 2017

QPP was authorized as part of the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (MACRA), which replaced the Sustainable Growth Rate payment provisions. More information on QPP can be found at: <https://qpp.cms.gov/>

Where can I find more information?

Information specific to small and rural providers can be found on CMS' Small Underserved Rural technical assistance [website](#).

CMS provides funding under the Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative (TCPI) program for organizations to assist providers in engaging in QPPs. You can search for your local TCPI organization on this [website](#).

Quality Improvement Organizations and Quality Improvement Networks (QIO/QIN) provide technical assistance to providers on a variety of CMS initiatives. [Click here](#) to find your local QIO/QIN.

For more information and to discuss your options, contact your local [State Office of Rural Health](#).

Funding for this document was possible in part by Cooperative Agreement #U14RH19776 from the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy. The views expressed in written materials or publications and by speakers and moderators do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services; nor does mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

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