

# Medicare Will Likely Face Pushback on Physician Pay Changes

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Federal officials will likely encounter some resistance to a proposed overhaul of Medicare's payment for evaluation and management (E/M) services, which could raise this reimbursement for some specialties while lowering it for others. E/M services make up about 40% of charges for Medicare's direct physician payment, meaning that any change in the billing approach will have a wide impact.

CMS Administrator Seema Verma has said the expected reduction in "documentation burden" from changes to Medicare's E/M codes should outweigh "any small negative payment adjustments." However, if you refer to Table 22 of CMS draft physician fee schedule, which is on page **367 (see link below)**. It shows certain predicted effects of the new E/M proposal.

Obstetricians and gynecologists would be in line for the biggest potential bump — a 4% gain — from E/M changes, according to Table 22, **while podiatry and dermatology would take the biggest hit — a 4% decrease**. The table details what CMS expects would happen to payments under a proposed single payment rate for E/M patient visits for what are now classified as level 2 to 5 visits. The chart also factors in other variables, including technical adjustments to practice expense per hour value.

Nurse practitioners might see a 3% bump, while physician assistants are among the group that might get a less than 3% increase in overall payment.

See link below for the proposed Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) draft:

[draft 2019 update of the physician fee schedule.](#)