



## News & Views

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### **AAMC Submits Comments on Health Care-Acquired Conditions**

The AAMC has submitted a comment letter to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on health care-acquired conditions in response to a listening session CMS held last month on the same topic. The session provided an opportunity for public comment on the implementation of the current Hospital-Acquired Condition (HAC) program, as well as the proposed expansion of the program to the hospital outpatient setting.

In its letter, the AAMC expressed support for the program's goal of reducing harm and negative outcomes, but outlined several concerns with the way the current program has been structured. Key areas of concern include the inability to account for high-risk, complex patients; the resources required to ensure that proper coding procedures are followed; and the rapid rate of expansion of selected conditions.

The AAMC recommended that CMS neither move forward in the expansion of the

HAC program to the hospital outpatient setting nor add any additional condition areas to the inpatient program prior to a formal evaluation of the program. The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 required the implementation of a HAC program designed to withhold payment to hospitals for certain conditions occurring during a hospital stay that were not present on admission.

To view the letter, go to [www.aamc.org/advocacy/library/teachhosp/corres/2008/123108.pdf](http://www.aamc.org/advocacy/library/teachhosp/corres/2008/123108.pdf). ❖

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