

NOTICE OF CHANGES IN STATEWIDE METHODS AND STANDARDS
FOR SETTING PAYMENT RATES

SUBJECT: MassHealth: Rates for MassHealth Hospice Services

AGENCY: Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services

SUMMARY: MassHealth Changes in Rates for Hospice Services Effective January 1, 2016

DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES:

Pursuant to Administrative Bulletin 15-19 posted January 5, 2016, and effective January 1, 2016, the per diem and per hour rates for hospice services have been updated to coincide with hospice rates established by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). The change in rates is pursuant to the implementation of a two-rate system instituted by CMS for Medicaid national components for compliance and noncompliance with federal quality reporting standards. Hospice providers that fail to submit required quality data in a given year will incur a two-percentage-point reduction to the market basket percentage increase. Beginning January 1, 2016, MassHealth will make payments to noncompliant providers at the noncompliant rate.

The updated hospice per diem and per hour rates by county as described above can be found in [Administrative Bulletin 15-19](#). As a result of this rate change, the annual aggregate state expenditures are estimated to increase by \$959,620 to \$1,068,871 depending on the number of compliant and noncompliant providers. The actual change in annualized expenditures may vary depending on actual utilization of services and the actual amount of compliant and noncompliant providers.

Individuals may submit written comments by e-mailing ehs-regulations@state.ma.us. Please submit electronic comments as an attached Word document or as text within the body of the e-mail with the phrase "MassHealth Changes in Rates for Hospice Services" in the subject line. All submissions must include the sender's full name and address. Individuals who are unable to submit comments by e-mail should mail written comments to EOHHS, c/o Debby Briggs, 100 Hancock Street, 6th Floor, Quincy, MA 02171. To be considered, written comments must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on **March 30, 2016**.

Please contact Almas Dossa at One Ashburton Place, 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02108, or by e-mail at Almas.Dossa@state.ma.us to request a copy of any notices or any written comments concerning the matters described herein.