DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Health Care Financing Administration

[Document Identifier: HCFA–R–246]

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment Request

In compliance with the requirement of section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), Department of Health and Human Services, is publishing the following summary of proposed collections for public comment. Interested persons are invited to send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including any of the following subjects: (1) the necessity and utility of the proposed information collection for the proper performance of the agency's functions; (2) the accuracy of the estimated burden; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology to minimize the information collection burden.

Type of Information Request: Extension of Currently Approved Collection.

Title of Information Collection: HEDIS 3.0 (Health Plan Data and Information Set) CAHPS (Consumer Assessment of Health Plans Study) Survey and Supporting Regulations 42 CFR 417.470, 417.126.

Form Number: HCFAR–246 (OMB approval #: 0938–0732).

Use: This collection effort (CAHPS) will be used to hold the Medicare managed care industry accountable for the quality of care they are delivering. This requirement will allow HCFA to obtain the information necessary for the proper oversight of the program. It is critical to HCFA's mission that we collect and disseminate information that will help beneficiaries choose among plans, contribute to the improved quality of care through identification of quality improvement opportunities, and assist HCFA in carrying out its responsibilities.

Frequency: Annually.

Affected Public: Businesses or other for profit, Individuals or Households.

Number of Respondents: 150,240.

Total Annual Responses: 150,240.

Total Annual Hours Requested: 49,579

To obtain copies of the supporting statement for the proposed paperwork collections referenced above, E-mail your request, including your address and phone number, to Paperwork@hcfa.gov, or call the Reports Clearance Office on (410) 786–1326. Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collections must be mailed within 60 days of this notice directly to the HCFA Paperwork Clearance Officer designated at the following address: HCFA, Office of Information Services, Security and Standards Group, Division of HCFA Enterprise Standards, Attention: John Rudolph, Room N2–14–26 7500, Security Boulevard, Baltimore, Maryland 21244–1850.

Dated: July 27, 1998.

John P. Burke III,

HCFA Reports Clearance Officer, Division of HCFA Enterprise Standards, Security and Standards Group, Health Care Financing Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Office of Inspector General

Solicitation of Information and Recommendations for Developing OIG Compliance Program Guidance for the Durable Medical Equipment Industry

AGENCY: Office of Inspector General (OIG), HHS.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This **Federal Register** notice seeks the input and recommendations of interested parties into the OIG's development of a compliance program guidance for the durable medical equipment (DME) industry, its providers and suppliers. Many providers and provider organizations have expressed an interest in better protecting their operations from fraud and abuse. Previously, the OIG has developed compliance program guidances for hospitals, clinical laboratories and home health agencies. In order to provide clear and meaningful guidance to those segments of the health care industry involved in the supply and distribution of DME, we are soliciting comments, recommendations and other suggestions from concerned parties and organizations on how best to develop compliance program guidance and reduce fraud and abuse within the DME industry.

DATES: To assure consideration, comments must be delivered to the address provided below by no later than 5 p.m. on September 21, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Please mail or deliver your written comments, recommendations and suggestions to the following address:

Office of Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, Attention: OIG–3–CPG, Room 5246, Cohen Building, 330 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20201.

We do not accept comments by facsimile (FAX) transmission. In commenting, please refer to file code OIG–3–CPG. Comments received timely will be available for public inspection as they are received, generally beginning approximately 3 weeks after publication of a document, in Room 5541 of the Office of Inspector General at 330 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC, on Monday through Friday of each week from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Christine Saxonis, Office of Counsel to the Inspector General, (202) 619–2078, or Joel Schaer, Office of Counsel to the Inspector General, (202) 619–0089.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The creation of compliance program guidance has become a major initiative of the OIG in its effort to engage the private health care community in addressing and fighting fraud and abuse. Recently, the OIG has developed and issued compliance program guidance directed at various segments of the health care industry.[1] This guidance is designed to provide clear direction and assistance to specific sections of the health care industry that are interested in reducing and eliminating fraud and abuse within their organizations.

The guidances represent the OIG's suggestions on how providers can best establish internal controls and monitoring to correct and prevent fraudulent activities. The contents of the guidances should not be viewed as mandatory for providers or as an exclusive discussion of the advisable elements of a compliance program.

In an effort to formalize the process by which the OIG receives public comments in connection with compliance program guidances, we are seeking, through this **Federal Register** notice, formal input from all interested parties as the OIG begins developing compliance program guidance directed at the DME industry, its providers and suppliers. The OIG will give consideration to all comments, recommendations and suggestions

[1] 62 FR 9435 (March 3, 1997) for clinical laboratories and 63 FR 8987 (February 23, 1998) for hospitals. The guidances can also be found on the OIG web site at http:/www.dhhs.gov/progorg/oig.