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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

[CMS-7036-N]

Health Insurance Marketplace, Medicare, Medicaid, and Children's Health Insurance Programs; Renewal of the Advisory Panel on Outreach and Education (APOE) and Request for Nominations

AGENCY: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), HHS.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the renewal of the Advisory Panel (the Panel) on Outreach and Education (APOE) charter. It also requests nominations for individuals to serve on the APOE.

DATES: Nominations will be considered if we receive them at the appropriate address, provided in the "**ADDRESSES**" section of this notice, no later than 5 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time (e.d.t.) on **[INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

ADDRESSES: Mail nominations to the following address: Abigail Huffman, Designated Federal Official, Office of Communications, CMS, 7500 Security Boulevard, Mail Stop S1-13-05, Baltimore, MD 21244-1850 or e-mail nominations to Abigail.Huffman1@cms.hhs.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Abigail Huffman, Designated Federal Official, Office of Communications, CMS, 7500 Security Boulevard, Mail Stop S1-13-05, Baltimore, MD 21244, 410-786-0897, e-mail Abigail.Huffman1@cms.hhs.gov or visit the

website at <http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/FACA/APOE.html>. Press inquiries are handled through the CMS Press Office at (202) 690-6145.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

The Advisory Panel (the Panel) on Medicare Education (the predecessor to the APOE) was created in 1999 to advise and make recommendations to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) on the effective implementation of national Medicare education programs, including with respect to the Medicare+Choice (M+C) program added by the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 (Pub. L. 105-33).

The Medicare Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA) (Pub. L. 108-173) expanded the existing health plan options and benefits available under the M+C program and renamed it the Medicare Advantage (MA) program. We have had substantial responsibilities to provide information to Medicare beneficiaries about the range of health plan options available and better tools to evaluate these options. Successful MA program implementation required us to consider the views and policy input from a variety of private sector constituents and to develop a broad range of public-private partnerships.

In addition, the Secretary, and by delegation, the Administrator of CMS was authorized under Title I of MMA to establish the Medicare prescription drug benefit. The drug benefit allows beneficiaries to obtain qualified prescription drug coverage. In order to effectively administer the MA program and the Medicare prescription drug benefit, we have substantial responsibilities to provide information to Medicare beneficiaries about the range of health plan options and benefits available, and to develop better tools to evaluate these plans and benefits.

The Affordable Care Act (Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Pub. L. 111-148 and Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, Pub. L. 111-152) expanded the availability of other option for health care coverage and enacted a number of changes to Medicare as well as to Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Qualified individuals and qualified employers are now able to purchase private health insurance coverage through competitive marketplace called Affordable Insurance Exchange, (also called Health Insurance Marketplace, or “Marketplace”). In order to effectively implement and administer these changes, we must provide information to consumers, providers, and other stakeholders pursuant to education and outreach programs regarding how these programs will change and the expanded range of health coverage options available, including private health insurance coverage through the Marketplace. The APOE allows us to consider a broad range of views and information from interested audiences in connection with this effort and to identify opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of education strategies concerning the Affordable Care Act.

II. Provisions of this Notice

A. Renewal of the APOE

Pursuant to the charter approved on January 21, 2015, the APOE was renewed. The APOE will advise HHS and CMS on developing and implementing education programs that support individuals with or who are eligible for Health Insurance Marketplace, Medicare, Medicaid, and the CHIP about options for selecting health care coverage under these and other programs envisioned under health care reform to ensure improved access to quality care, including prevention services. The scope of this Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) group also includes advising on education of providers and stakeholders with respect to the

Affordable Care Act and certain provisions of the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act enacted as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

The charter will terminate on January 21, 2017, unless renewed by appropriate action. The APOE was chartered under 42 U.S.C. 222 of the Public Health Service Act, as amended. The APOE is governed by provisions of Pub. L. 92-463, as amended (5 U.S.C. Appendix 2), which sets forth standards for the formation and use of advisory committees.

Pursuant to the renewed charter, the APOE will advise the Secretary and the Administrator concerning optimal strategies for the following:

- Developing and implementing education and outreach programs for individuals enrolled in, or eligible for, Medicare, Medicaid, and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), or coverage available through the Health Insurance Marketplace.
- Enhancing the federal government's effectiveness in informing Health Insurance Marketplace, Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP consumers, issuers, providers, and stakeholders pursuant to education and outreach programs of issues regarding these programs, including the appropriate use of public-private partnerships to leverage the resources of the private sector in educating beneficiaries, providers, and stakeholders.
- Expanding outreach to vulnerable and underserved communities, including racial and ethnic minorities, in the context of Health Insurance Marketplace, Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP education programs.
- Assembling and sharing an information base of "best practices" for helping consumers evaluate health coverage options.
- Building and leveraging existing community infrastructures for information,

counseling, and assistance.

- Drawing the program link between outreach and education, promoting consumer understanding of health care coverage choices, and facilitating consumer selection/enrollment; which in turn support the overarching goal of improved access to quality care, including prevention services, envisioned under the Affordable Care Act.

B. Requests for Nominations

The APOE shall consist of no more than 20 members. The Chair shall either be appointed from among the 20 members, or a federal official will be designated to serve as the Chair. The charter requires that meetings shall be held approximately four times per year. Members will be expected to attend all meetings. The members and the Chair shall be selected from authorities knowledgeable in one or more of the following fields:

- Senior citizen advocacy
- Outreach to minority and underserved communities
- Health communications
- Disease-related advocacy
- Disability policy and access
- Health economics research
- Behavioral health
- Health insurers and plans
- Health IT
- Social media
- Direct patient care
- Matters of labor and retirement

Representatives of the general public may also serve on the APOE.

This notice also announces that in July 2015, there will be 11 expired terms of membership and in October 2015, there will be an additional 2 expired terms of membership. This notice is an invitation to interested organizations or individuals to submit their nominations for membership for all 13 vacancies on the APOE (no self-nominations will be accepted). The Administrator will appoint new members to the APOE from among those candidates determined to have the expertise required to meet specific agency needs, and in a manner to ensure an appropriate balance of membership. We have an interest in ensuring that the interests of both women and men, members of all racial and ethnic groups, and disabled individuals are adequately represented on the APOE. Therefore, we encourage nominations of qualified candidates who can represent these interests. Any interested organization or person may nominate one or more qualified persons.

Each nomination must include a letter stating that the nominee has expressed a willingness to serve as a Panel member and must be accompanied by a curricula vitae and a brief biographical summary of the nominee's experience.

While we are looking for experts in a number of fields, our most critical needs are for experts in aging, social media, tribal affairs, matters of labor and retirement, health economics research, behavioral health, health insurers and plans, direct patient care, racial/ethnic health/disparities, disability, quality, pharmacy, social work, rural health, CHIP, and state programs/Medicaid.

We are requesting that all curricula vitae include the following:

- Date of birth
- Place of birth

- Title and current position
- Professional affiliation
- Home and business address
- Telephone and fax numbers
- E-mail address
- List of areas of expertise

Phone interviews of nominees may also be requested after review of the nominations.

In order to permit an evaluation of possible sources of conflict of interest, potential candidates will be asked to provide detailed information concerning such matters as financial holdings, consultancies, and research grants or contracts.

Members are invited to serve for 2-year terms, contingent upon the renewal of the APOE by appropriate action prior to its termination. A member may serve after the expiration of that member's term until a successor takes office. Any member appointed to fill a vacancy for an unexpired term shall be appointed for the remainder of that term.

III. Copies of the Charter

The Secretary's Charter for the APOE is available on the CMS website at: <http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/FACA/APOE.html> or you may obtain a copy of the charter by submitting a request to the contact listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION** section of this notice.

Authority: Sec. 222 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 217a) and sec. 10(a) of Pub. L. 92-463 (5 U.S.C. App. 2, sec. 10(a) and 41 CFR 102-3).

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program No. 93.733, Medicare--Hospital Insurance Program; and Program No. 93.774, Medicare--Supplementary Medical Insurance Program)

Dated: February 23, 2015.

Marilyn Tavenner,

Administrator, Centers for Medicare &

Medicaid Services.

BILLING CODE: 4120-01-P

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