Medicare Might Soon Cover HIV Testing

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Medicare may pay for beneficiaries' HIV tests under a draft government proposal, Reuters reports. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) said September 9 that there was suitable evidence that HIV screening is a necessary and appropriate preventative health measure.

"Knowing about their HIV status can help patients live longer, fuller lives as well as avoid unintentional transmission of the virus to others," said U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius in a statement.

According to CMS, any Medicare patient who asks for an HIV test should be able to get one, even if he or she is not considered to be at risk, "since this group is likely to include individuals not willing to disclose high-risk behaviors."

CMS will take public comment on the proposal for 30 days before making a final ruling, expected by December 8.

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