

# MEDICARE PART A BULLETIN

February 19, 1999

Hospital Medicare Bulletin H-91

To: All Medicare Providers  
From: Medicare Program Relations  
Subject: **Wage Data for Fiscal Year 2000 - Hospital Wage Index**

**ATTENTION MEDICARE BUSINESS OFFICE:** Please distribute to all appropriate health care facility personnel.

A public use file containing the wage data from cost reports beginning during Federal fiscal year (FY) 1996 was made available as of February 5, 1999. This file will be used in the development of the proposed FY 2000 wage index, which will be published in the Federal Register this spring. The file also contains data from HCFA's teaching costs survey.

Note that hospitals have the right to request revisions to the wage data; therefore, it is important to review the wage data files.

Providers may access the file in two ways: via the Internet, or by ordering a 3.5" diskette (in ASCII format).

The FY 1996 wage data file is available on the Internet at HCFA's home page at <http://www.hcfa.gov>. To access the public use files directly, the address is: <http://www.hcfa.gov/stats/stats.htm>.

To order the wage data file on diskette, see the attached ordering directions and order form. The cost is \$165 for the 3.5" ASCII format diskette. For express mail delivery, indicate on the form the express mail delivery company and the account number to which the delivery bill should be charged.

Note that the American Hospital Association generally makes the wage data file available to individual state hospital associations. Hospitals may want to check with their state hospital association to see if they have or will be getting the file. (Note: The Florida Hospital Association sent specific wage data to hospitals the week of February 15.)

## **Deadline to Request Revisions to Data**

Hospitals have the right to request revisions to the wage data. A hospital that wishes to revise its data must submit its request along with appropriate detailed documentation to the intermediary no later than March 5, 1999. Note that hospitals are required to verify the accuracy of their wage data because this will be their last opportunity to initiate new revisions to the data for the FY 2000 wage index.

If a hospital disagrees with the intermediary's resolution of a requested change, the hospital may contact HCFA in an effort to resolve policy disputes. These contacts must be made prior to April 5,

1999, in order to allow time for consideration. HCFA will not consider factual determinations at this time, as these should have been resolved earlier in the process.

### **Survey on Teaching Hospitals' Part A Costs**

HCFA is examining whether to remove teaching costs from the FY 2000 wage index. The intermediary is working to identify the teaching physician Part A costs for all teaching hospitals the intermediary services.

Although minor discrepancies between the costs reported for teaching physicians (taken from Line 23, Worksheet A) on Worksheet A-8-2 and those on the survey are possible because of certain wage-related costs that are excluded from the wage index calculation, these should not be significant. The intermediary may be contacting the hospital to verify any significant variances.

As noted above, the data collected from the teaching physician Part A costs survey the intermediary completed last December is included in the wage data file.

### **GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS AND ORDERING INFORMATION**

#### **1. Standard Output Specifications:**

Diskette 3 1/2"

1. ASCII
2. High Density

#### **2. Method of Payment (All monies must be drawn on U.S. bank):**

a. Payments must accompany requests. (No credit card payments). Make company check or money order payable to:

Health Care Financing Administration-PUF

or

HCFA-PUF

#### **b. Electronic Transmitted Payment**

1. U.S. Federal Government Agencies need Agency Location Code
2. U.S. Banks only (Call for instructions)

c. Effective January 1, 1993, Purchase Orders require prepayment.

d. Money will be returned if orders are sent more than 30 days before the stated availability of file.

#### **3. Public Use Files Inquiries:**

a. The Public Use Files hotline telephone number is (410) 786-3691.

b. The Public Use Files Fax number is (410) 786-6418.

4. Mailing Instructions:

a. Regular Mailing Address:

Health Care Financing Administration  
Public Use Files  
Accounting Division  
P.O. Box 7520  
Baltimore, MD 21207-0520

b. Express Mailing Address:

Health Care Financing Administration  
OIS/EDG/DID - Secretary  
Mail Stop N3-14-24  
7500 Security Boulevard  
Baltimore, MD 21244

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

**(This form is not to be used as a Data Release Form.)  
PUBLIC USE FILES ORDER FORM  
(SEE INSTRUCTIONS AND PRINT LEGIBLY)**

Date:

Health Care Financing Administration  
Public Use Files  
Accounting Division  
P.O. Box 7520  
Baltimore, MD 21207-0520  
(410) 786-3691

**PURCHASE REQUEST COST**

1. HCFA HOSPITAL WAGE INDEX SURVEY FILE — PROPOSED FY 2000 PPS UPDATE

\$165each

**TOTAL**

\$165 x \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

COMPANY CHECK/MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO HCFA-PUF, AMOUNT: \_\_\_\_\_

(No Personal Checks. All checks must be drawn on an American Bank.)

OUTPUT SPECIFICATIONS: Diskette (3.5 in.)

EXPRESS MAILING COMPANY NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

EXPRESS MAILING ACCOUNT NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME, TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

COMPANY/ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: (AREA CODE) \_\_\_\_\_

FAX NUMBER: (AREA CODE) \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

Allow 4-6 weeks for delivery. This form can be reproduced for additional orders.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
A HCFA CONTRACTED CARRIER & INTERMEDIARY