

Appendix E

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- Access:** Potential and actual entry of a population into the health care delivery system.
- Acute care:** Services within a hospital setting intended to maintain patients for medical and surgical episodic care over a relatively short period of time.
- Acute disorder:** Characterized by a sudden onset, marked symptoms, and a short course.
- Analgesic drug:** A substance causing loss of sensitivity to pain without loss of consciousness.
- Anaphylaxis:** An unusual or exaggerated allergic reaction to foreign proteins or other substances.
- Anemia:** An abnormal decrease in the concentration of erythrocytes (red blood cells), concentration of hemoglobin, or hematocrit.
- Antibiotic drug:** Any of a number of substances produced by one microorganism and inhibitory to another microorganism.
- Antineoplastic drug:** Substance acting against the formation of a tumor.
- Artery:** A blood vessel that carries the blood away from the heart to the various parts of the body.
- Aseptic:** Free from infection.
- Average cost:** For a home infusion provider, *average total cost* per patient is the sum of all the provider's costs of providing services, divided by the number of patients served. Of total costs, some costs are fixed in the short run (e.g., capital equipment), while others vary depending on the number of patients served (e.g., dressing supplies). *Average variable costs are the* sum of these variable costs, divided by the number of patients served. In the long run, average variable costs may approximate *marginal costs*.
- Catheter:** In infusion therapy, the tube that is inserted into the body (e.g., into a vein) so that drugs or other fluids can be administered.
- Cellulitis:** Infection of the skin and surrounding soft tissue.
- Central access device:** An infusion device in which the catheter is inserted directly into a large vein near the heart.
- Chronic disorder:** A disorder characterized by extended duration and typically by slow development or a pattern of recurrence.
- Conditions of participation:** Requirements that a hospital or other health care facility must meet in order to be allowed to receive payments for Medicare patients. An example is the requirement that hospitals conduct utilization review.
- Cystic fibrosis:** A genetic disorder that results in abnormal mucous secretions, including excess mucus in the lungs. Persons with cystic fibrosis are predisposed to recurrent pulmonary infections.
- Cytotoxic drug:** A drug that has a specific toxic action upon cells or special organs.
- Diagnosis-related groups (DRGs):** Groupings of diagnostic categories drawn from the International Classification of Diseases and modified by the presence of a surgical procedure, patient age, presence or absence of significant comorbidities or complications, and other relevant criteria. DRGs are the case-mix measure mandated for Medicare's prospective hospital payment system by the Social Security Amendments of 1983 (Public Law 98-21).
- Dialysis:** In persons with end-stage renal disease, a process that rids the body of liquid waste products, replacing the kidney's normal function.
- Drug regimen:** A systematic plan for taking medication that is designed to improve or maintain the health of a patient.
- Durable medical equipment:** Medical equipment that is capable of withstanding repeated use, generally not useful to someone in the absence of injury or illness, and appropriate for home use. Examples include intravenous poles and infusion pumps.
- Elastomeric infuser:** An infusion device that consists of a disposable container with an inner elastic bladder that can be filled with medication.
- Embolus:** A detached blood clot, air bubble, or clump of foreign matter that blocks or occludes a blood vessel.
- Enteral nutrition:** The intake of nutrients that undergo at least partial processing in the intestine. Strictly speaking, enteral nutrition includes normal food intake through the mouth. However, the term is often used to indicate more specifically the intake of nutrients through a tube that leads directly to the stomach or the small intestine.
- Epidural drug administration:** Entrance of a drug into epidural space surrounding the spinal cord, so that the drug is absorbed directly into the spinal cord.
- Extravasation:** The forcing out of fluid (e.g., an infused drug) from a proper vessel into the surrounding tissue.
- Family caregiver:** A family member or friend who assists the patient in self-care responsibilities on an unpaid basis.
- Febrile:** Of or pertaining to fever.
- Fiscal intermediary:** An organization that acts as an agent and purchaser of health care insurance or health care services for an insurer. Medicare's fiscal intermediaries include Part A intermediaries and Part B carriers (see *Medicare intermediaries or carriers*).
- Granulocyte:** A leukocyte (white blood cell) that contains granules in its cytoplasm.
- Gravity drip system:** A drug delivery system in which a bag or bottle is hung on a hook or a pole above the level

- of the patient, and fluid flows by gravity down the line and into the catheter. The rate of flow in a simple gravity drip system is controlled primarily by a special clamp or valve on the line that can be adjusted to permit the prescribed amount of fluid to flow through.
- Health maintenance organization: A health care organization that, in return for prospective per capita payments, acts as both insurer and provider of comprehensive but specified medical services.
- Hemolytic reaction: A process by which erythrocytes (red blood cells) are destroyed.
- Hemophilia: An inherited disease in which the body lacks blood coagulation (clotting) factors.
- Heparin: An anticoagulant drug.
- Homebound: Confined to the home.
- Home drug infusion therapy: Treatment that consists of prolonged (or continuous) injections of drugs that are administered in the home, usually repeatedly.
- Home health agency:** An organization that delivers health services to patients in the home setting.
- Hospice: A facility or program designed to provide a caring environment for supplying the physical and emotional needs of the terminally ill.
- Immune globulin: A biological preparation that consists of proteins from human blood plasma. These proteins react with foreign proteins to form antibodies that aid in the body's defense against infections.
- Immune system: The body's defense method, characterized by a high degree of resistance to specific foreign substances.
- Infiltration: The accumulation in a tissue of substances not normal to it or in amounts in excess of the normal.
- Infusion: In **this report, the slow, prolonged injection of a fluid into the body.**
- Infusion pump: A device that moves an infused fluid into the body under positive pressure.
- Inpatient **services:** Care that includes an overnight stay in a medical facility.
- Intravenous drug administration: Entrance **of a drug into the body by way of a vein.**
- Length of stay (LOS): **The number of days a patient remains in the hospital from admission to discharge.**
- Licensed practical nurse: A nurse with usually 12 months of practical **nursing training and** licensure, as opposed to a registered nurse with a four year baccalaureate degree and licensure.
- Marginal **cost:** The incremental cost to the provider or supplier **of serving one** more patient.
- Medicaid: A Federal-State **medical assistance** program authorized in 1965 to pay for **health care services** used by people who meet income and other requirements. Eligibility requirements and benefits vary **from State to State.**
- Medicare: A nationwide, federally administered health insurance program authorized in 1965 **to cover the cost** of services for eligible persons over age 65, persons receiving Social Security Disability Insurance **payments** for 2 years, and persons with end-stage renal disease. **Medicare** consists of two separate but coordinated programs-hospital insurance (**Part A**) and supplementary medical insurance (Part B). Health insurance protection **is available to insured** person without regard **to income.**
- Medicare beneficiary: One who receives coverage for health services under **Medicare.**
- Medicare intermediaries **or** carriers: Fiscal agents (**typically Blue Cross plans or commercial insurance firms**) under contract to the Health Care **Financing** Administration for administration **of specific Medicare tasks. These tasks** include determining reasonable costs for covered items and services, making payments, and guarding against unnecessary use of covered services. In this report, intermediaries and carriers are collectively referred to as fiscal intermediaries.
- Metabolism:** The totality of chemical processes occurring in **a living** organism.
- Narcotic: **A drug that** dulls the senses, relieves pain, and induces profound sleep.
- Neoplastic disease: A condition causing or resulting in tumor formation.
- Nosocomial infection: An infection originating in **a hospital.**
- Osteomyelitis: Infection of the bone.
- Outpatient facility: **A healthcare facility** where medical services are provided to patients who are not inpatients **of hospitals.**
- Palliative treatment: Treatment whose goal is patient comfort rather than cure.
- Parenteral drug administration: Entrance **of a drug into the body by means** other than through the digestive tract.
- Peer **Review** Organization: Organizations established in 1982 (Public Law 97-248) **with which the U.S.** Department of Health and Human Services contracts to review the appropriateness **of settings of care and the quality of care** provided to Medicare beneficiaries.
- Per capita payment: A payment rendered **to a provider, typically on a monthly basis, to cover costs** of all care provided **to that patient during** a given time period.
- Primary **care** physician: A physician who provides basic first-line **medical care, such as a practitioner, general pediatrician, obstetrician/gynecologist, and general internist.**
- Prospective payment: Payment for **medical care on the basis of rates set in advance of the time period** in which they apply. The unit of payment may vary from individual medical services to broader **categories, such as hospital case, episode of illness, or person (cavitation).**
- Prosthetic **device:** An **artificial** replacement for a **missing (or nonfunctional) body part.**

Pulmonary embolism: The sudden obstruction of a blood vessel in the lungs by an abnormal particle circulating in the blood.

Quality assessment: Measurement and evaluation of the quality of health care provided to individuals or to groups of patients.

Quality assurance: Conduct of activities that safeguard or improve the quality of health care by correcting deficiencies found through quality assessment.

Retrospective payment: A payment method for health care services in which hospitals (or other providers) are paid for services rendered after the service has taken place. In this country, the term has traditionally referred to hospital payment, since other providers have generally been paid on the basis of charges instead of costs.

Secondary infection: A second infection occurring in a person already suffering from an infection of another nature. For example, a person being treated by drug infusion for a bone infection could become secondarily infected as a result of organisms entering the body through a catheter.

Septicemia: The presence of disease-causing bacteria in the bloodstream.

Skilled nursing facility: A subacute or **long-term care facility that provides skilled nursing care (i.e., care that requires the expertise of a trained nurse).**

Subcutaneous drug administration: Entrance of a drug into the body by means of a needle or catheter inserted under the skin.

Swing-bed: Licensed acute-care beds designated by a hospital to provide either acute or long-term care

services. A hospital qualifying to receive Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement for care provided to swing-bed patients must be located in a rural area (as defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census), have less than 100 acute-care beds, and (when applicable) must have received a certificate of need for the provision of long-term care services from its State health planning and development agency.

Third-party payer: Payment by a private insurer or government program to a medical provider for care given to a patient.

Thrombocytopenia: A condition that results in a fewer than normal number of platelets per unit volume of blood.

Thromboembolic disease: Obstruction of a blood vessel with thrombotic material carried by the bloodstream from the site of origin to plug another vessel.

Thrombophlebitis: Inflammation of a vein associated with thrombus formation.

Thrombus: An aggregation of blood factors, primarily platelets; a clot. If the clot detaches and moves elsewhere in the bloodstream, it is termed an embolus.

Total parenteral nutrition: A feeding system that includes all the nutrients needed by the body and that is introduced into the body intravenously.

Vascular system: The body's network of arteries, veins, and capillaries.

Vein: A vessel that carries blood from various organs or parts back to the heart.

Vesicant: A substance capable of inducing discharge or blister.