SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO THE HOSPICE METHODOLOGY

The Hospice Methodology has two parts, one for Agencies and one for Facilities.

The Hospice Methodology for Agencies has been in effect for three years, and during that time, the Agency has found that the current methodology can be improved. Hospice providers say that in order for a hospice to be economically viable, it must serve at least 25 patients.

The formula used to calculate the number of expected hospice patients is being changed to use 25% of all deaths instead of different percentages of cancer and non-cancer deaths. This is in keeping with national hospice trends.

The methodology has used the number of hospice admission subtracted from the eligible hospice patients to determine county need. The proposed change will use the number of deaths, rather than the number of admissions. This will result in a more accurate assessment of need by eliminating duplicate numbers, since one patient can be admitted more than once, but only dies once.

The exceptions section is being removed because the numbers of patients available under these rules is too small to allow a viable hospice into a service area.

The Priorities section in both the Hospice Agency and Facility methodologies is being replaced with a section of Requirements because the word priorities indicates preference, whereas requirements are mandatory and apply to all applicants. These items will assure that an applicant has looked at the space available for an office or facility and the cost and has a business plan in place so the hospice can be economically feasible if a POA is awarded. Some of the proposed changes mirror the Medicare rules for Hospice.