



1717 Rhode Island Avenue, NW
Suite 800
Washington, DC 20036

Telephone 202.872.1260
Facsimile 202.466.3509
Website brt.org

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Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
Room 445-G, Hubert H. Humphrey Building
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave, S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

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Re: RIN 0938-AQ17
Comments Re: Proposed Rule for Medicare Program; Availability of
Medicare Data for Performance Measurement, 76 Fed. Reg. 33566
(June 8, 2011)

Ladies and Gentlemen:

This letter responds to the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) published in the Federal Register on June 8, 2011, the Proposed Rule for the Medicare Program; Availability of Medicare Data for Performance Measurement.

Business Roundtable (BRT) is an association of chief executive officers of leading U.S. companies that provide health coverage to over 35 million employees, retirees and their families. We welcome the opportunity to respond to the proposed rule and the issues posed by CMS relating to the release of Medicare claims data.

Business Roundtable CEOs have long advocated making Medicare claims data available so that payers may aggregate their own claims data with Medicare data to have a broader and more reliable measure of the quality of care rendered by health care providers and their relative performance in treating important medical conditions. Combining Medicare claims data with claims data from other sources will provide a new opportunity to evaluate the performance of providers and also enable consumers and employers to select higher-quality, more efficient physicians, hospitals and other care providers in their area. Since 2006, BRT has called for the release of Medicare claims data for these very reasons.