

Community Oncology Alliance Statement on the Enhancing Oncology Model

Statement on the new Enhanced Oncology Model (EOM) from Ted Okon, Executive Director, COA

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Ted Okon, COA

practices have been eagerly awaiting a successor to the Oncology Care Model (OCM) and are glad to see the CMS Innovation Center (CMMI) act. As COA noted in a [letter to CMS](#) late last year, independent community oncology practices participating in the OCM saw dramatic success in enhancing patient cancer care while lowering treatment costs.

First and foremost, we hope that CMMI has taken the extensive feedback from the OCM into account in developing the Enhancing Oncology Model (EOM). While we still need to do a full analysis of the EOM model details, the OCM was a [herculean effort with fixable flaws](#). One

thing we are very pleased with is that CMMI has made this model completely voluntary.

At first glance, one significant concern is that CMMI is cutting the Monthly Enhanced Oncology Services (MEOS) payments in the EOM by nearly half of the OCM (\$70 in the EOM vs. \$160 in the OCM), while expecting more work from practices. COA is extremely supportive of screening for health-related social needs and electronic patient-reported outcomes (ePROs), it seems unfair to burden practices with more work but pay less for it, particularly as practices are dealing with the return of the Medicare sequester cut, inflation, and ongoing COVID-19 practice challenges. We hope to hear more from CMMI about this issue.

COA is disappointed that there will remain an unnecessary one-year gap between the OCM ending and EOM beginning. During this time practices will have to shoulder the extensive investments and operational changes put in place to benefit patients without reimbursement.

Community oncology practices are fully committed to positive, patient-centered improvement of cancer care and look forward to supporting CMMI and practices to make the EOM a success. The

goals of the EOM are ones we wholeheartedly support, especially related to improving cancer health equity, electronic patient reported outcomes, enhanced access to cancer screenings, and more.

Read more about the new Enhancing Oncology Model on the EOM website at <https://innovation.cms.gov/innovation-models/enhancing-oncology-model>

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