Episode Summary:
Tonsillectomy

Arkansas Health Care Payment Improvement Initiative

I. What is the Tonsillectomy episode?

Tonsillectomy is one of the most common surgical procedures in the United States in children under the age of 15. It is performed to alleviate such conditions as recurrent tonsillitis and sleep breathing disorder.

II. Key features of the Tonsillectomy episode

Episode definition: A tonsillectomy episode is an outpatient tonsillectomy, adenoidectomy, or adeno-tonsillectomy procedure on a patient between the ages of 3 and 21. It includes related procedure services during and within 90 days prior to and 30 days post-procedure. Examples of related services include initial consult, inpatient and outpatient facility services, professional services, and related medications. The episode also includes complications that may occur after the procedure.

Principal Accountable Provider:
For Medicaid patients, the PAP is the provider performing the tonsillectomy/adenoidectomy.

Quality measures: To participate in episode gain sharing, providers are required to pass a quality metric to administer intra-operative steroids in a minimum of 85 percent of their tonsillectomy episodes. The report-only quality metrics are post-operative primary bleed rate, secondary bleed rate and avoidance of post-operative antibiotics prescriptions.

Adjustments and exclusions: The tonsillectomy episode excludes patients: 1) with an uvulopalatopharyngoplasty (UPPP) on the date of the procedure, 2) with a body mass index (BMI)>50, 3) with select co-morbid conditions (e.g. Down syndrome, cancer, severe asthma, cerebral palsy), 4) who are under 3 or above 21 years of age, 5) that die during the episode, 6) have the status “left against medical advice” during the episode, 7) have dual enrollment in Medicare/Medicaid, or 8) do not have continuous Medicaid enrollment for the duration of the episode.

Episode gain-sharing cost adjustments will be made in cases where: 1) certain comorbidities (e.g., COPD, asthma) are present, or 2) the tonsillectomy also includes an adeno-tonsillectomy.