

## **CMS Places National Moratorium On Home Health, Hospice Agency Enrollment**

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On Wednesday, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced a six-month moratorium on Medicare enrollment in home health and hospice.

The move is part of the second Trump administration's crackdown on fraud, waste and abuse. CMS called Medicare home health and hospice "high-risk categories" and a "key source of fraudulent activity."

"We've seen systemic and deeply troubling fraud in the hospice and home health space, with bad actors exploiting some of our most vulnerable Medicare patients and stealing money from the American taxpayer," CMS Administrator Dr. Mehmet Oz said in a statement. "Today we're shutting the door on fraud – preventing new bad actors from entering Medicare while we aggressively identify, investigate, and remove those already exploiting them. This is about protecting patients, restoring integrity, and safeguarding taxpayer dollars."

The freeze will apply to all applications for initial Medicare enrollment as well as to certain changes in majority ownership, which are "frequently used to obscure control by bad actors." Current enrollments will not be impacted, CMS said, and existing providers can continue to deliver services to Medicare beneficiaries.

During the six-month moratoria, CMS plans to accelerate the removal of home health and hospice providers suspected of fraud from the Medicare program. The agency also said it would intensify targeted investigations and deploy advanced data analytics.

The nationwide moratoria will prevent bad actors from evading detection by shifting across state lines, according to CMS.

The home health and hospice moratoria follow the announcement of a six-month nationwide [moratorium](#) on certain durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics, and supplies (DMEPOS) companies.

"With three separate moratoria now in place, CMS has taken some of the most significant fraud prevention actions in the agency's history," CMS' announcement read. "The moratoria are part of CMS' ongoing efforts to stop fraud before it starts, using data-driven prevention and real-time enforcement as part of a coordinated federal approach."

[Rumors](#) of a hospice moratorium circulated in the weeks ahead of the announcement – though the efficacy of a moratorium has been called into question. Hilary Loeffler, vice president of policy and regulatory affairs for the National Alliance for Care at Home, said that moratoria do not necessarily solve the issue of hospice fraud.

“I don’t think broad enrollment moratoria work, quite frankly,” Loeffler [previously told](#) Home Health Care News’ sister publication, Hospice News. “CMS still needs to go in and take action and clean up the fraud in those spaces, if that’s why they’re leveraging the enrollment moratorium.”