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Payment Methodologies -- INTRODUCTION -- ELEMENTS OF A PAYMENT SYSTEM -- Type of Payment -- Definition -- Discussion -- Comparative Assessment -- Unit of Payment -- Definition -- Discussion -- Comparative Assessment -- Basis of Payment -- Definition -- Discussion -- Level of Payment -- Definition -- Discussion.

OTHER ISSUES IN PAYMENT SYSTEMS -- Updating Payments -- Adjustments -- Cost Sharing -- MAKING IMPROVEMENTS A REALITY -- Designing Payment Policies -- Implementing New Payment Policies -- CONCLUSION -- REFERENCES -- 7 Recommendations -- INTRODUCTION -- CONCLUSION -- REFERENCES -- Acronyms and Glossary -- ACRONYMS -- GLOSSARY -- APPENDIX A Acknowledgments -- APPENDIX B Medicare Clinical Laboratory Payments: The National Limitation Amount and Its Relationship to Payment Amounts -- APPENDIX C Study of Fees and Payment System Characteristics for Clinical Laboratory Services -- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY -- Study Methodology -- Study Findings -- STUDY OBJECTIVES AND DESCRIPTION OF STUDY METHODOLOGY -- Background and Study Objectives -- Payment Rate Determination Methodology -- Selection of Payers -- Selection of Clinical Laboratory Services -- Additional Information Included in the Survey -- CLINICAL LABORATORY PAYMENT RATES -- Introduction -- Clinical Laboratory Fee Data -- Clinical Laboratory Capitation Data -- Comparison of Fees -- CHARACTERISTICS OF LABORATORY SERVICE PAYMENT SYSTEMS -- Survey Approach -- Laboratory Payment System Characteristics -- REFERENCES -- EXHIBIT C.1: SURVEY INSTRUMENT FOR STUDY OF PAYMENT RATES FOR LABORATORY SERVICES -- Section I. Background and General Description of Laboratory Payment Methodologies -- Section II. Fee-for-Service Plans -- Section III. Capitated Plans -- Section IV. Additional Comments -- APPENDIX D Annual Volume of Laboratory Tests by Laboratory Type and Waived-Nonwaived Test Status, 1996-1998, 1999-Early 2000 -- APPENDIX E 1998 Medicare Carrier Denial Rates -- APPENDIX F Committee Biographies.

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## Sommario/riassunto

Clinical laboratory tests play an integral role in helping physicians diagnose and treat patients. New developments in laboratory technology offer the prospect of improvements in diagnosis and care, but will place an increased burden on the payment system. Medicare, the federal program providing coverage of health-care services for the elderly and disabled, is the largest payer of clinical laboratory services. Originally designed in the early 1980s, Medicare's payment policy methodology for outpatient laboratory services has not evolved to take into account technology, market, and regulatory changes, and is now outdated. This report examines the current Medicare payment methodology for outpatient clinical laboratory services in the context of environmental and technological trends, evaluates payment policy alternatives, and makes recommendations to improve the system.

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