

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation announced the availability of \$1 BILLION for the “Health Care Innovation Challenge”. The webpage is pasted at the bottom of this message. This is a rare opportunity for which EMS is squarely positioned. Although states are not eligible to apply, we are encouraging state EMS offices to distribute this announcement to local EMS agencies, associations and regions. Letters of intent are due December 19th, 2011. The four page fact sheet is very informative: <http://innovations.cms.gov/documents/pdf/innovation-challenge-fact-sheet.pdf> . In addition to the specific mention of EMS (community paramedicine) on page 5 of the Funding Opportunity Announcement <http://innovations.cms.gov/documents/pdf/innovation-challenge-foa.pdf> , there are many other EMS project opportunities in all three objectives of the grant, such as innovative care delivery, payment models, and measuring quality and care improvement. These could include bundled payment demonstrations, pay for performance, EMS articulation with accountable care organizations, EMS projects with federally qualified health care centers and “most appropriate disposition/destination” projects. Measurable improvement in quality and cost savings is imperative to the success of any project.

This is an excellent chance to get multiple EMS projects moving and demonstrating the contribution that EMS can make to the improvement of health care in the US. Ideal grantees for these projects will be collaborations of the actual care providers that make a difference within local communities.