
Date: December 19, 2005

To: All PDP Sponsors and MA Organizations

From: Gary A. Bailey
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Plan Policy and Operations
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Subject: **Providing Needed Information to New Enrollees When You Accept Enrollment Applications—FOLLOW-UP**

Purpose: To ensure that new enrollees have the information they need to fill a prescription or obtain services through their PDP or MA plan on the effective date of their coverage.

As we approach the beginning of the Medicare prescription drug benefit, we know that you share our goal of ensuring that Medicare beneficiaries can access this new benefit as efficiently as possible. Thus, we want to reiterate the importance of having effective steps in place to provide your new enrollees with the information they need to obtain their prescriptions and other services without delay. This note follows up on our December 16 memorandum concerning plan responsibilities to provide key enrollment-related information to new members when they accept enrollment applications, regardless of when the enrollments are confirmed. At the same time though, I want to assure you that CMS is making every effort to provide plans with prompt transaction reply reports (TRRs), including a special TRR planned for release on December 20. This special TRR will cover all transactions that were 1) received by 9:00 PM on December 13, and 2) not reported on any previous weekly TRR.

As discussed in the December 16 memorandum, it is critical that you follow CMS' existing guidance on the provision of information to prospective enrollees. Attached for your convenience are copies of the MA-PD and PDP Model Notices to Acknowledge Receipt of Completed Enrollment Election. **Again, this guidance is designed to ensure that new enrollees have the information they need to fill a prescription or obtain services through their PDP or MA plan on the effective date of their coverage.**

To this end, we urge you to take the following measures:

- Make every effort to communicate the required acknowledgment information to your new enrollees by the effective date of coverage, including the actual membership card whenever possible. If the card cannot be provided timely, the acknowledgement notice, which tells the enrollee to present that notice at the pharmacy/provider to demonstrate coverage, becomes even more critical. **For enrollment applications that you accept near the end of the month, please take any needed measures to provide necessary information as soon as possible, rather than simply complying with the existing 7-day deadline for end-of-the-month enrollments.**
- If you currently combine your enrollment acknowledgement notification with your enrollment confirmation materials, **please consider the viability and efficacy of immediately sending an acknowledgment notice to prospective enrollees when you submit an enrollment to CMS, rather than linking this process to the enrollment confirmation mailing.** (CMS will facilitate the immediate approval of any revisions to approved marketing materials that may be associated with such a change.)
- In those situations where it is logically impossible to provide new enrollees with acknowledgement information before their effective date of coverage (such as for an enrollment accepted on December 31, 2005), **please make sure that you have clear case-work procedures in place through your members services staff to ensure that new enrollees can receive covered services on January 1, 2006, and that enrollees have appropriate contact information should they need services immediately.**

Thank you for your continuing cooperation in making sure that this landmark change in the Medicare program is implemented successfully.

Please contact your CMS Account Manager if you have any questions about this policy.

Attachments