

## Provider Partnership Program (PPP) E-mail Notification Archives

**December 8, 2005**

### **CMS ANNOUNCES AN ADDITIONAL SITE FOR DEMONSTRATION FOR BENEFICIARIES WITH END STAGE RENAL DISEASE**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently announced that it has selected an additional organization, Evercare of Georgia, a United Healthcare product, to participate in a new demonstration that will increase the opportunity for Medicare beneficiaries with end stage renal disease (ESRD) to join managed care plans.

This demonstration has been designed to test the effectiveness of disease management models to increase quality of care for ESRD patients while ensuring that this care is provided more effectively and efficiently.

To view the entire press release, please click here:

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/media/press/release.asp?Counter=1737>

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**December 13, 2005**

***Hello everyone and I hope you're doing well. As some of you already know, CMS is about to launch its new and improved website! Here are the details ~***

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services is pleased to announce a new and improved [cms.hhs.gov](http://cms.hhs.gov) website coming December 15, 2005. The new website is reorganized to make it easier to browse by audience or topic:

-The new "Center" links on the home page navigation bar provide one-stop-shopping areas targeted to specific professional audience needs. The Medicare Fee-for-Service Provider Center will include links to pages developed specifically for physicians, hospitals, and other Medicare providers and suppliers. The "Center" pages are also available through the "Browse by Audience" feature.

-The topic pages are organized under eight major subject areas, which are then divided into categories and sections. All section links have overview pages designed to provide general information about the specific section. The topic pages are available from the home page or through the "Browse by Subject" feature. (FYI, the Medlearn Web Page is under the "Outreach and Education" topic page!)

The new website also introduces an improved Google search feature, which will make it even easier for you to locate information.

After the new website is launched, users who enter URLs from the old website will be automatically redirected to the new web pages. Please follow the directions and be sure to change your favorites or bookmarks to reflect the new URLs.

For a preview of the new website, follow this link for a demonstration:

[http://www.cms.hhs.gov/cms\\_redesign\\_demo.asp](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/cms_redesign_demo.asp)

***I hope you find the new website easier to navigate. As I obtain more information that I think will help you adapt to the website changes, I will pass them along to you. In the meantime, stay well and enjoy the holiday season!***

***With best regards ~ Valerie***

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December 14, 2005

**Webcast Date & Time:**

Wednesday, December 14, 2005  
2:00 PM EST  
will be archived through May 2006

***Help is Here: Practical Tips for Counseling People with Medicare about Prescription Drug Coverage***

Includes three typical counseling sessions to guide counselors in helping people understand, decide, choose, and join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan

Access web cast at:

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/news/mma/webcasts.asp>

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## December 15, 2005

As of December 15, the Hospital Quality Alliance has updated its consumer-oriented website for hospital quality information, Hospital Compare. The Hospital Compare website can be accessed at [www.HospitalCompare.hhs.gov](http://www.HospitalCompare.hhs.gov) or at [www.Medicare.gov](http://www.Medicare.gov). Hospital Compare displays information from over 4000 U.S. hospitals that voluntarily reported on the quality of care they provided adult patients in 2004 and 2005. Hospital Compare reports on 20 measures of hospital quality of care in the areas of heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia, and the prevention of surgical infections.

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## December 16, 2005

It has been brought to the attention of the CMS Prescription Drug Program Officials that some nursing facilities have distributed letters to their patients falsely asserting that CMS has placed a requirement on facilities to contract only with Long Term Care pharmacies that currently meet all of the Performance and Service Criteria for LTC Network Providers under Medicare Part D. We understand that this is causing some LTC facilities to exclude some pharmacies from servicing Part D patients resident in their LTC facilities.

Please be advised that this is an inappropriate reading of the CMS requirements. On November 8, 2005, CMS issued the "Long-Term Care (LTC) Convenient Access Standard Statement" stating the following: "We also reiterate our previous guidance that any pharmacy – whether it is a LTC or retail pharmacy – that can meet the ten performance and service criteria outlined in our March 2005 LTC Guidance and is willing to accept any other standard contracting terms and conditions established by the plan for its network pharmacies can participate as a LTC network pharmacy. As clarified in previous guidance, this means that network LTC pharmacies must have the capability to meet the performance and service criteria, either directly or through a subcontractor. It does not mean that prospective LTC network pharmacies must show that they currently provide such services or that they could provide all these service directly. The actual

services that must be provided by the LTC network pharmacy will depend on the specific needs of the specific LTC facilities serviced by the pharmacy."

***Mary Loane (for Valerie Hart)***  
***Division of Provider Information Planning and Development***

December 28, 2005

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) are hosting weekly conference calls on Provider Part D issues. These calls will be scheduled every Tuesday from 2:00 - 3:00 PM EST, beginning January 3, 2006. **We have also scheduled an additional call tomorrow, Thursday, December 29 at 2:00 PM EST.** Each call will be a 60-minute conference to enable discussions of issues and resolutioning involving the Part D program. Prescribers are encouraged to use this time to ask questions and describe problems so that CMS can continue to improve the Part D program.

To participate in any of these calls, dial the conference phone number 1-800-619-2457 and reference the password "Part D".

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December 28, 2005

**I am resending this message to alert you that there will not be a call on Thursday, December 29th. The first call will take place on Tuesday, January 3, 2006.**

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December 29, 2005

*Seasons Greetings to everyone! I hope you are all enjoying your holiday season and resting up for a dynamic 2006! Here's a variety of items for your end-of-the-year reading pleasure, including information on ~*

- Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage
- Open Door Forums
- Hospital Compare
- RAI User's Manual

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### **Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage Information**

#### **MORE THAN 21 MILLION MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES TO BE COVERED FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUGS AS OF JANUARY 1, 2006**

More than 21 million seniors and people with disabilities will get prescription drug coverage as of Jan. 1, 2006, according to HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt. The number includes more than one million Americans who signed up for the new stand-alone coverage in the first 28 days it was offered. Another 500,000 are expected to be enrolled by the end of January.

"The new prescription drug benefit is off to a strong start," Secretary Leavitt said. "With more than 21 million participating in coverage as of January 1, we are well on the way of meeting our goal of 28-30 million enrolled in the first year of the program. While there is still much work to do, we are encouraged by the early results."

"Interest in the drug coverage is strong, and these numbers do show that people are getting questions answered and making decisions. For people who have decided they want coverage, they should go ahead and enroll now so they can take advantage of this important new protection," said Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Administrator Mark B. McClellan, M.D., Ph.D.

To view the entire press release, click here:

<http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2005pres/20051222.html>

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#### **False Assertion by Some Nursing Facilities**

It has been brought to the attention of CMS Prescription Drug Program Officials that some nursing facilities have distributed letters to their patients falsely asserting that CMS has placed a requirement on facilities to contract only with Long Term Care pharmacies that currently meet all of the Performance and Service Criteria for LTC Network Providers under

Medicare Part D. We understand that this is causing some LTC facilities to exclude some pharmacies from servicing Part D patients resident in their LTC facilities.

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### **Medicare: How It's Changing To Help More People Kidney Community Initiative to Host Teleconference Series for Professionals**

This information is provided by the over 35 kidney organizations and companies that comprise the Kidney Medicare Drugs Awareness and Education Initiative, whose goal is to help people with kidney disease and the health care professionals who care for them understand the new Medicare drug benefit.

There will be a series of free 30-minute monthly teleconferences on Medicare prescription drug coverage (Part D). The objective is to share key messages and kidney-specific information to answer questions health care professionals or patients may have

Any healthcare professional or person with kidney disease who wants to learn more about Medicare prescription drug coverage may participate one of two ways:

- Listen to the live teleconference at noon EST by calling **1-877-707-9628** and using the code: **44919**. Call a few minutes in advance to be sure you don't miss any of the call. Music lets you know you're connected. Download the slides starting the Monday prior to the event.
- Listen to the recorded teleconference and download the transcript and slides later on the Teleconference Archives page at **<Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.>**.

E-mail your questions for any Medicare Part D topic to [info@kidneydrugcoverage.org](mailto:info@kidneydrugcoverage.org). Please type "question" in the subject line. Questions about the teleconference topic may be answered during the call. Questions will be answered and posted on the website FAQ page as soon as possible.

Feel free to visit **<Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.>** where you can register for site updates and to receive information about future teleconferences. On this site, you can read more about the community initiative and find kidney-specific materials. If you do not have Internet access, ask a friend, family member, or your library to help you get this information.

#### **Tuesday, August 16 (archived)**

Understanding Medicare Part D: Overview of Benefit and Low-Income Subsidy for Medicare Beneficiaries with Limited Income and Resources

**Tuesday, September 20 (archived)**

Medicare – How It's Changing to Help More People: What You Need to Know Now About Coordinating Part D Benefits with Medicaid, Medicare Savings Programs, Medigap, Employer/Retiree, and Union Plans, and more

**Tuesday, October 18 (archived)**

Medicare – How It's Changing to Help More People: Helping Patients Choose a Medicare Part D Plan

**Tuesday, November 15 (archived)**

Medicare – How It's Changing to Help More People: Exceptions and Coverage Determinations

**Tuesday, December 20**

Medicare – How It's Changing to Help More People: Appeals and Grievances

**Tuesday, January 17**

Medicare – How It's Changing to Help More People

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**Open Door Forum Information**

As requested from the December 14th **Ambulance Open Door Forum**, the Advanced Life Support (ALS) assessment definition is outlined in the CMS Manual System. In addition, it also available in the Code of Federal Regulations at 42 CFR 414.605. To view the pdf file click here: [http://new.cms.hhs.gov/AmbulanceFeeSchedule/downloads/cfr414\\_601.pdf](http://new.cms.hhs.gov/AmbulanceFeeSchedule/downloads/cfr414_601.pdf) .

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**Special CMS Open Door Forum:  
The Medicare E-Prescribing Program  
Thursday, January 5, 2006  
2:00 – 4:00 PM (Eastern Standard Time)**

**Conference Call Only**

On Thursday, January 5, 2006, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will host a Special Open Door Forum (ODF) focusing on clarification and discussion of the E-prescribing Final Rule and the adopted standards for e-prescribing that were published in the Federal Register on Monday November 7, 2005.

Under Title I of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA), this rule adopts foundation standards that were not subject to pilot testing because they demonstrated adequate industry experience, and are the first set of final uniform standards for conducting e-prescribing transactions.

During this two-hour Open Door Forum, we hope to clarify understanding of the final rule and provide an overview of some of its key elements. We intend to discuss the timeline for the adoption of additional e-prescribing standards, the proposed foundation standards, and CMS' plans to conduct a pilot project to test the additional standards. The pilot project will test and examine the interoperability of these additional standards with the adopted foundation standards. Based on the results of the pilot project, the Secretary will adopt final uniform standards in 2008 in accordance with the timing prescribed by the statute. We will allow

ample time for questions or comments, and expect to listen to and respond to a broad and representative sample of input from various stakeholders.

To view the final rule, please use the following web link:

<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/pdf/05-22026.pdf>

Additionally, a set of questions and answers on the final rule can be found on the CMS web site at [http://questions.cms.hhs.gov/cgi-bin/cmshhs.cfg/php/enduser/std\\_alp.php?&p\\_cv=2.229](http://questions.cms.hhs.gov/cgi-bin/cmshhs.cfg/php/enduser/std_alp.php?&p_cv=2.229)

We look forward to your participation during this open session.

Open Door Forum Participation Instructions:

CMS Staff & Authorized Speakers  
Dial: 1-877-792-5692

General Public  
Dial: 1-800-837-1935

Reference Conference ID: 3100443

Note: TTY Communications Relay Services are available for the Hearing Impaired. For TTY services dial 7-1-1 or 1-800-855-2880 and for Internet Relay services click here <http://www.consumer.att.com/relay/which/index.html>. A Relay Communications Assistant will help.

ENCORE: 1-800-642-1687

"Encore" is a recording of this call that can be accessed by dialing 1-800-642-1687 and entering the Conf. ID # 3100443. The recording can be accessed beginning, Monday, January 9, 2006 and expires after 4 business days.

For automatic emails of Open Door Forum [schedule updates](#) (Listserv registration) and to view Frequently Asked Questions please visit our website at: [www.cms.hhs.gov/opendoor](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/opendoor).

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The first **Pharmaceutical, Pharmacy & Device Manufacturers Open Door Forum for Year 2006** is scheduled for...

Date: January 10, 2006

Start Time: 2:00 PM Eastern Standard Time (EST)

Conference Leader(s): Larry Kocot/Gil Kunken/Rich Lawlor

Open Door Participation Instructions:

CMS Staff & Authorized Speakers Only  
Dial: 1-877-792-5692

General Public  
Dial: 1-800-837-1935

Reference Conference ID 3100979



Note: TTY Communications Relay Services are available for the Hearing Impaired. For TTY services dial 7-1-1 or 1-800-855-2880 and for Internet Relay services click here <http://www.consumer.att.com/relay/which/index.html> .  
A Relay Communications Assistant will help.

**ADDRESS:**

Hubert H. Humphrey Bldg.  
Conference Room 735G  
200 Independence Avenue S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201  
Map & Directions: <http://www.hhs.gov/about/hhhmap.html>

ENCORE: 1-800-642-1687; Conf. ID# 3100979

"Encore" is a recording of this call that can be accessed by dialing 1-800-642-1687 and entering the Conf. ID. beginning 2 hours after the call has ended. The recording will expire after 3 business days.

For Forum Schedule updates, Listserv registration and Frequently Asked Questions please visit our website at [www.cms.hhs.gov/OpenDoorForums/](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/OpenDoorForums/) .

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### **Hospital Compare Updated**

As of December 15, the Hospital Quality Alliance has updated its consumer-oriented website for hospital quality information, Hospital Compare. The Hospital Compare website can be accessed at [www.HospitalCompare.hhs.gov](http://www.HospitalCompare.hhs.gov) or at [www.Medicare.gov](http://www.Medicare.gov). Hospital Compare displays information from over 4000 U.S. hospitals that voluntarily reported on the quality of care they provided adult patients in 2004 and 2005. Hospital Compare reports on 20 measures of hospital quality of care in the areas of heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia, and the prevention of surgical infections.

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### **RAI User's Manual Information**

The RAI User's Manual for the MDS 2.0 has been updated for December 2005. These updates and revisions are now available at [www.cms.hhs.gov/nursinghomequalityinits/20\\_nhqimds20.asp](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/nursinghomequalityinits/20_nhqimds20.asp) . To access, scroll down to the "Download" section of this webpage. Under the "Update Files" subheading, click on "December Update 2005". To print Appendix A, please go to the "RAI User's Manual by Chapter" subheading, select the link and print in its entirety.

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***This might be the last note I send you in 2005 but I wouldn't count on it.  
Happy New Year, just in case ~ Valerie***

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**CMS announces the implementation of the Medicare Oncology Demonstration Project for 2006. The purpose of this one-year demonstration project is to identify and assess, in office-based oncology practices, certain oncology services that positively affect outcomes in the Medicare population.**

**We have developed two *Special Edition Medlearn Matters* articles that provide detailed information on this demonstration project. The first article, SE 0589 (<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MedlearnMattersArticles/downloads/SE0589.pdf>), provides Medicare policy and claims processing information applicable to the demonstration; the second article, SE 0588 (<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MedlearnMattersArticles/downloads/SE0588.pdf>), provides information on documentation and coding guidelines. In addition to accessing the articles through the above web addresses, I have attached them in PDF format for your convenience.**

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SE0589.pdf (301  
KB)



SE0588.pdf (338  
KB)

Please note that the password for these calls has been changed to "**RBDML**". To participate, dial the conference phone number 1-800-619-2457 and reference the password "**RBDML**". These calls will reoccur every Tuesday at 2pm EST until Part D is fully implemented.

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**From:** Hart, Valerie A. (CMS/CMM)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 28, 2005 3:21 PM  
**To:** Abettmann@aan.com; aduncan@nhpco.org; AFEHCT@aol.com; ahoward@aahomecare.org; andrewguccione@apta.org; anns@emsa.net; aocd@swbell.net; bbaker@mail.acponline.org; bgay@aahsa.org; bjd@acoi.org; bm.hpa@sso.org; bmarone@acep.org; boden@aha.org; BusinessGp@aol.com; charlesc@ohanet.org; ckoppen@avancerhp.com; cmetzler@aota.org; cmonaco@aoa-net.org; ddodero@aamc.org; djgrinstead@hhlaw.com; dmay@aha.org; dolphc@kidney.org; dparadis@mi-osteopathic.org; dlrichardson@mindspring.com; Dtaylor@NACHC.com; dwerfel@aol.com; emmerconsulting@verizon.net; esmith@AHCA.org; fomapr@earthlink.net; frankmallon@apta.org; fulledl@shands.ufl.edu; galligos@ruralpartners.org; gaylelee@apta.org; gmiller@nhpco.org; hmccants@acc.org; ibaer@aamc.org; ilusis@asha.org;

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Camozzi, Frank J. (CMS/WC); Carpenter, Colleen C. (CMS/SC); Carroll, Dennis J. (CMS/NC); Cebuhar,  
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(CMS/OEA); Kennedy, Julie N. (CMS/SC); Lawlor, Richard J. (CMS/OEA); Levine, Mark A. (CMS/WC);  
Logue, Neal E. (CMS/SC); Lombardo, Richard (CMS/NC); Lysen, Toni K. (CMS/WC); Maloney, Lourdes  
R. (CMS/WC); Martinez-Fonts, Diana (CMS); McCague, D R. (CMS/WC); McSwain, Dianne (HHS);  
Meinholdt, Uvonda L. (CMS/MC); Merrill, Jill B. (CMS/WC); Messick, Carol D. (CMS/NC); Mirabal, Jose  
R. (CMS/NC); Nathan, Marva (CMS/NC); Ng, Nancy (CMS/NC); Nichols, Lyla K. (CMS/WC); Nicholson,  
Geraldine A. (CMS/CMM); Odgers, Claudia K. (CMS/MC); Pagan, Arthur W. (CMS/SC); Patterson,  
Elaine (CMS/NC); Pelella, Susan L. (CMS/NC); Perteet, Dolores (CMS/MC); Pizzano, Winifred A.  
(CMS/OEA); Pryce, Marcia A. (CMS/NC); Robl, Ceceilia A. (CMS/WC); Rogers, William D. (CMS);  
Savory, Maureen M. (CMS/NC); Scarborough, Melissa (CMS/SC); Scott, Carolyn (CMS/MC); Singleton,  
Kelli (CMS/NC); Slaten, Reginald G. (CMS/NC); Smith, Debra (CMS/NC); Smith, Lisa D. (CMS/CMM);  
Steward, Donna M. (CMS/WC); Szeftlinski, Francis C. (CMS/CBC); Valuck, Thomas B. (CMS/CMM);  
Walker, Gloria J. (CMS/MC); White, James F. (CMS/NC); White, Malvin D. (CMS/WC); Worrall, Chris  
M. (CMS/OSORA); Case, Mary A. (CMS); Frieman, Richard L. (CMS); Fritter, Robin R. (CMS/CMM);  
GreeneBruce, Rhonda S. (CMS/CBC); GRIFFITH, GEANELLE E. (CMS/CMM); Langer, Aryeh A.  
(CMS/CMM); Loane, Mary K. (CMS); Palmer, Ann M. (CMS); Pardue, Karen L. (CMS); Phillips, Robin;  
Ross, Van D. (CMS/CMM); Roulac, Hazeline T. (CMS); Santana, Nicole M. (CMS/CMM); Sutton, Robin  
L. (CMS/CMSO); Yost, Andrea (CMS)

Subject:

Medicare Prescription Drug Program

**I am resending this message to alert you that there will not be a call on Thursday, December 29th. The first call will take place on Tuesday, January 3, 2006.**

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The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) are hosting weekly conference calls on Provider Part D issues. These calls will be scheduled every Tuesday from 2:00 - 3:00 PM EST, beginning January 3, 2006. Each call will be a 60-minute conference to enable discussions of issues and resolutioning involving the Part D program. Prescribers are encouraged to use this time to ask questions and describe problems so that CMS can continue to improve the Part D program.

To participate in any of these calls, dial the conference phone number 1-800-619-2457 and reference the password "Part D".

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December 30, 2005

**Please see the attached CMS Press Release regarding payment provisions in the Traditional Medicare Program that may be delayed by the Deficit Reduction Act.**



12.30.2005 Budget  
Reconciliati...

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