

Provider Partnership Program (PPP) E-mail Notification Archives

May 11, 2005

CMS Implements \$1 Billion Program to Help Hospitals and Others Recoup Unpaid Emergency Health Service Costs for Undocumented Aliens: Section 1011 of the Medicare Modernization Act

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently announced a new program to provide \$1 billion over four years to help hospitals, certain physicians, and ambulance providers recoup the costs of providing needed emergency medical care.

Section 1011, Federal Funding of Emergency Health Services Furnished to Undocumented Aliens, of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act (Medicare Modernization Act or MMA) set aside \$1 billion through 2008 to help hospitals and certain other emergency care providers recoup a portion of their costs associated with providing emergency services to qualified individuals who are uninsured or cannot afford emergency care.

Each state will receive funding based on the formula established in the law. Payments will be made directly to hospitals, certain physicians, and ambulance providers, including Indian Health Service facilities and Indian tribes and tribal organizations, as long as they did not receive payment from any other source such as the person treated or an insurance company.

In implementing the new program, CMS will make payments to eligible providers for some or all of their unreimbursed costs of providing emergency health care services required under section 1867 of the Social Security Act (Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA)) and related hospital inpatient, outpatient and ambulance services. Under EMTALA hospitals with emergency rooms are required to treat and stabilize patients who present with emergency medical needs regardless of their ability to pay. The cost of this care often strains hospital budgets and can threaten a hospital's ability to keep its emergency room open.

This notice has been placed on display at the Office of the Federal Register and will be published in the Federal Register on or about May 13, 2005. CMS' policy notice and related documents can be found be viewed at:
<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/providers/section1011>.

MEDICARE EXPANDS ULTRASOUND TREATMENT FOR FRACTURES

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently announced that it intends to expand Medicare coverage of ultrasound stimulation for fractures that are

not healing properly, called nonunion fractures. CMS will perform a post-coverage analysis of claims data to examine the net health benefit of ultrasound stimulation for nonunion fractures without prior surgery.

“We are making this bone healing treatment more widely available, while at the same time gaining knowledge that will better inform our coverage decision process,” said CMS Administrator Mark B. McClellan, M.D., Ph.D. “And we are doing it without any additional burden to beneficiaries or providers.”

The post-coverage analysis will examine the claims data submitted to CMS for the evaluation of the health benefits of ultrasound treatment. By evaluating this data, CMS will develop better evidence and ensure that Medicare beneficiaries are receiving quality health care.

Ultrasound stimulation, a non-invasive treatment for nonunion fractures, has been covered for Medicare beneficiaries when surgery has failed since 2000. CMS developed this new coverage decision in response to a request by Smith & Nephew, a manufacturer of an ultrasonic bone healing system, to remove the coverage requirement that surgery must have failed before ultrasound can be used as a treatment.

CMS found the new evidence was adequate to conclude that non-invasive ultrasound stimulation for the treatment of nonunion bone fractures prior to surgical intervention is reasonable and necessary. Expanding coverage to include patients without any prior surgical treatments will benefit Medicare beneficiaries and provide another non-surgical treatment option for patients that are not good surgical candidates.

“This decision is part of Medicare’s ongoing commitment to provide new medical technology to its beneficiaries,” said CMS Administrator, Mark B. McClellan, M.D., Ph.D.

CMS is publishing its decision memorandum in accordance with the coverage decision timeline mandated by the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA). The final decision memorandum appears on the CMS web site at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/coverage>.

This press release can be viewed online at:
<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/media/press/release.asp?Counter=1430>

The LTCH PPS final rule (CMS-1483-F) was published in the Federal Register on May 6, 2005. This final rule contains proposed annual payment rate updates and policy changes for the 2006 LTCH PPS Rate Year. This final rule can be viewed at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/providers/longterm/frnotices.asp> .

To view the CMS press release, go to <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/media/press/release.asp?Counter=1436> .
To view additional LTCH PPS information for Medicare, go to <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/providers/longterm/> .

Best Regards ~ Valerie

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May 11, 2005

Hello Everyone!

You may be interested in reading a Special Edition Medlearn Matters article (SE0524) that discusses how health care providers may want to implement the ASC X12N 276/277 Claims Status Inquiry/Response Transactions and benefit by being able to request and receive the status of claims in one standard format, for all health care plans. You can view this article at the following url:

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medlearn/matters/mmarticles/2005/SE0524.pdf>

In addition, CR 3741 expanded the national coverage for the use of 2- [F-18] Fluoro-D-Glucose Positron Emission Tomography scans (FDG-PET) for certain cancer indications. For more information on this expanded coverage, please see the Medlearn Matters article (MM3741) 'Expanded Coverage for PET Scans for Cervical and Other Cancers, New Coding for PET Scans, and Billing Requirements for PET Scans for Specific Indications of Cervical and Other Cancers'. You can view the article at the following url:

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medlearn/matters/mmarticles/2005/MM3741.pdf>

Take care ~ Valerie

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May 12, 2005

Just released!! The CMS Administrator has announced a May 23, 2005 start of enumeration for the National Provider Identifier (NPI). The NPI is the standard unique health identifier for health care providers that was adopted by the Secretary of Health and Human Services under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996. The Administrator's announcement letter informs health care providers about the NPI, describes three ways to obtain an NPI, and gives them guidance as to what they should do once they have obtained their NPI. The letter, which also provides contacts and resources should health care providers have questions about the NPI, can be viewed at http://www.cms.hhs.gov/hipaa/hipaa2/npi_provider.asp on the CMS Website. I have also attached a pdf copy of the letter to this note for your convenience.



npi-provider.pdf
(58 KB)

Additionally, a new *Medlearn Matters* article regarding the NPI is also available at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medlearn/matters/mmarticles/2005/SE0528.pdf> on the web. This, too, is attached to this note in a pdf file.



SE0528.pdf (265
KB)

Please share this letter and the *Medlearn Matters* article as widely as possible within your organization and with your members in any way you can. As we've proven in the past, working together can make this transition from the use of existing health care provider identifiers to NPIs a smooth and successful one!

Best Regards,

Valerie

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May 16, 2005

Now Available!

Limited Income? SSA Can Help - Posters

Medicare beneficiaries with limited income are directed to where they can call to find out if they are eligible for help with prescription drug costs. Posters are suitable for display in a physician's, provider's or supplier's office, a pharmacy, or other health care setting where Medicare beneficiaries will see this information. Flat posters are suitable for wall display. Easel posters are suitable for counter display. Order the size and style appropriate for your use. Artwork can not be specified as posters will be sent based on availability at the time the order is received. To view and order the posters you can go to the Medlearn Prescription Drug Coverage web page located at:

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medlearn/drugcoverage.asp> on the CMS website. We need your help in getting this information out to Medicare beneficiaries with limited income and resources. We encourage you to order and display the posters where Medicare beneficiaries will see them.

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May 23, 2005

Hello everyone ~ here's the latest scoop on the National Provider Identifier (NPI) front!

Starting May 23, 2005, all health care providers can apply for their National Provider Identifier (NPI). The NPI will replace health care provider identifiers in use today in standard health care transactions. The health plans with whom you do business will instruct you as to when you may begin using the NPI in standard transactions. All HIPAA covered entities except small health plans must begin using the NPI on May 23, 2007; small health plans have until May 23, 2008. For additional information, and to complete an application, visit <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov> on the web.

As you may know, the Medicare program is not accepting the NPI in standard transactions yet. Explicit instructions on time frames and implementation of the NPI for Medicare billing will be issued later in 2006.

Also, an instructional web tool, called the NPI Viewlet, is now available for viewing at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medlearn/npi/npiviewlet.asp> and under "HIPAA Latest News" at

www.cms.hhs.gov/hipaa/hipaa2 on the CMS website. This tool provides an overview of the NPI, a walkthrough of the application, as well as live links to the NPPES website where the learner can apply for an NPI, and is designed for all health care providers. In the near future, you will also be able to access the viewlet at <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov> on the web.

Stay tuned for updates on this and other important CMS initiatives.

With best regards,

Valerie

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