

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES  
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services  
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**PLAN OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY GROUP**

**DATE:** September 15, 2006

**TO:** Medicare Advantage Organizations, Demonstrations, 1876 Cost Organizations, and Prescription Drug Plans

**FROM:** Cynthia E. Moreno, Director

**SUBJECT:** Update to Acceptable Characters in the HPMS MA and PDP Marketing Modules

Due to new CMS IT system standards, the HPMS MA and PDP Marketing Modules can no longer accept the following characters in any field within the modules:

“<”,  
“>”,  
“;”, and  
“&”

The Medicare Marketing Guidelines indicate the following: “Template materials must show how the placeholders will be populated (e.g., <date>), or populate the placeholder fields with all variables (e.g., <benefit x/benefit y>). Template materials will have only one marketing identification number regardless of the number and combination of variable elements.”

Please note that this language does not provide guidance on how to enter the information into the HPMS marketing modules, but rather it is guidance on what must be indicated on the actual Marketing Material. While the “<>” are used in the example, other characters may be substituted when entering data into the “Template ID” field in HPMS. The following characters remain acceptable for use:

“{”,  
“[”, or  
“(”.

Please note that the system will generate an error message if an unacceptable character is used. We apologize for any confusion this change may have caused.

For additional information, please contact your regional office reviewer.

Thank you.