



MEDICARE-MEDICAID COORDINATION OFFICE

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TO: Medicare-Medicaid Plans

FROM: Lindsay P. Barnette
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SUBJECT: Contract Year 2017 Monitoring of Medicare-Medicaid Plan Provider and Pharmacy Directories – Update

In this memorandum, we provide information to Medicare-Medicaid Plans (MMPs) about the status of Contract Year (CY) 2017 Provider and Pharmacy Directory monitoring and next steps, as follow-up to our November 4, 2016 memorandum, “Contract Year 2017 Monitoring of Medicare-Medicaid Plan Provider and Pharmacy Directories.”

We emphasize that this monitoring relates to MMPs only and is separate from the CMS review of Medicare Advantage (MA) plans’ online provider directory accuracy.¹ Whereas the MMP directory monitoring focused on the presence of required information, the review of MA online directories focused on both the presence and the accuracy of required information. For parent organizations operating in both programs, we clarify that the monitoring of MMP directories has no impact on CMS’ findings about their MA plans.

Last year we reviewed CY 2016 directories for all MMPs. This year, we reviewed CY 2017 directories for a sample of MMPs. We are happy to report that we are seeing significant improvement in the presence of required information. We are sending this memorandum to all MMPs to share some of the findings to inform work on their CY 2018 directories.

Overall, we noted a number of improvements in the information contained in the CY 2017 directories and appreciate the effort that MMPs have made to address previously identified gaps. A summary of the most commonly recurring findings from the sample of reviewed directories follows.

Requirements most frequently satisfied were:

- Including location-specific requirements for each provider with more than one address.

¹ See the report and data CMS released in January 2017 at this link:
<https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Health-Plans/ManagedCareMarketing/index.html>.

- Identifying provider types within provider listings.
- Describing how an enrollee can find a network provider nearest his or her home.
- Including specific accommodations at the provider's location for individuals with physical disabilities.²
- Providing the address and phone number for all locations of independent (non-chain) pharmacies.

Requirements most improved from CY 2016 were:

- Providing additional information on home infusion and long-term care pharmacy services and how members can get more information.
- Indicating the total number of each type of provider.
- Including licensing information and, as applicable, other credentials and/or certifications of providers.

Still, there remains room for additional improvement, particularly in ensuring that all necessary information is contained in online directories. Requirements least frequently satisfied were:

- Describing how members can make a standing request to get required materials, now and in the future, in a language other than English or in an alternate format.
- Advising members that mail-order pharmacies are to obtain consent before shipping or delivering any prescriptions the member does not personally initiate.

In addition, while we noted some progress in several sampled directories indicating if a provider's facility is on a public transportation route and if a provider has completed cultural competence training, we see opportunity for further improvement in fulfilling these requirements.

Guidance for All MMPs

CMS remains committed to helping all MMPs improve their Provider and Pharmacy Directories to ensure that enrollees and prospective enrollees have the information they need to make informed decisions about their health care choices. Our goal is for CY 2017 directory monitoring findings to be useful to MMPs in preparing their CY 2018 directories. As support, we will host a call for all MMPs in the next several months to review best practices and lessons learned from the monitoring process. We will provide additional information in the weeks ahead and welcome your ideas and participation. In future years, we intend to focus directory monitoring efforts on identifying remaining gaps in information most critical to enrollees and ensuring online directories contain all information required in print directories.

Guidance for MMPs with Directories Reviewed for CY 2017

The Medicare-Medicaid Coordination Office (MMCO), through a contractor, reviewed CY 2017 print and online Provider and Pharmacy Directories for a sample of MMPs between mid-November 2016 and the end of January 2017.

We considered PDF versions of the directory to be the print directory and search engines on MMP websites to be the online directory. We held both versions to the same standard and,

² This requirement was also among requirements most improved from CY 2016.

where both were made available, applied model directory requirements to PDFs and search engines alike per the Medicare Managed Care Manual, Chapter 4, Section 110.2.1.³ As in CY 2016, we assessed the presence of required information, not the accuracy of the information provided.

We defined, weighted, and scored elements similar to the approach taken in CY 2016. Each MMP's CY 2017 raw score is the percentage of required elements met. In addition, where applicable, we measured the MMP's improvement from CY 2016 to CY 2017. We expect to issue monitoring results letters by the end of March 2017 to each MMP whose directories were reviewed. Each letter will include the MMP's raw score, improvement measure, and final score for CY 2017, as well as a table of weights and descriptions of reviewed requirements and a clearly labeled summary of the specific elements reviewed.

Please contact the Medicare-Medicaid Coordination Office at MMCOCapsModel@cms.hhs.gov if you have any questions about the contents of this memorandum.

³ Requirements of the Medicare Managed Care Model, Chapter 4, Section 100.2.1 are incorporated by reference in all states' MMP Marketing Guidance documents, which are located at <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare-Medicaid-Coordination/Medicare-and-Medicaid-Coordination/Medicare-Medicaid-Coordination-Office/FinancialAlignmentInitiative/InformationandGuidanceforPlans.html>, halfway down the page, under the "State-Specific Information" heading, grouped alphabetically by state.