



MEDICARE DRUG AND HEALTH PLAN CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION GROUP (MCAG)

DATE: March 12, 2010

TO: All Medicare Advantage Organizations and Prescription Drug Plan Sponsors

FROM: Danielle R. Moon, J.D., M.P.A.
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SUBJECT: Agent and Broker Training and Testing for CY 2011

The purpose of this memorandum is to summarize the results of CMS' agent and broker training and testing pilot for CY 2010, as well as provide guidance to Medicare Advantage organizations (MAOs) and prescription drug plan (PDP) sponsors regarding agent and broker testing and training for CY 2011.

As provided under 42 CFR 422.2274(b) (b) - (c) and 423.2274(b) - (c), MAOs and PDP sponsors are required to annually train and test all agents and brokers selling Medicare products on Medicare rules, regulations and information on the plan products they intend to sell. To that end, on July 31, 2009, CMS released a pilot online training and testing module for CY 2010. The pilot concluded on October 16, 2009.

Based on our review of the reports and feedback received from agents who participated in CMS' training and testing program, we believe the CY 2010 pilot was successful. Twenty-six MAOs and Part D sponsors volunteered to participate in the pilot, and about 3,700 agents and brokers were trained and tested. About 85% of trained agents and brokers passed the certification exam.

In evaluating the result of the pilot, we have concluded that CMS should move toward greater standardization of agent and broker training and testing. Accordingly, consistent with our goal of ensuring that all agents and brokers selling Medicare products have a comprehensive and consistent base of understanding of Medicare rules, we are currently exploring our regulatory authority to standardize agent and broker training and testing for future contract years. In the meantime, for CY 2011, we intend to issue guidelines regarding the minimum information and curriculum Medicare agent and broker training and testing programs should cover. This guidance will be issued later this year to allow ample time for plan sponsors and testing and training vendors to include the required elements in their CY 2011 training programs.

We wish to again thank the organizations and sponsors that volunteered to participate in the CMS pilot and all MAOs and PDP sponsors for their continued commitment to ensuring that only agents and brokers who successfully complete training and testing and meet all other CMS requirements are permitted to sell Medicare products.