

Effective August 3, 2005, CMS is suspending the current CAP vendor bidding process for which bids were previously due August 5, 2005. Any bids received by CMS will be returned to the bidder without review. At a later time, this website will provide updates on revised bidding deadlines and additional information about implementation of CAP.

CMS is suspending the bidding at this time to allow us to more fully review public comments to the CAP IFC (CMS-1325-IFC) as well as to implement further clarifications to the bidding process before we proceed to accept bids from vendors. We will be publishing a notice of the suspension in the Federal Register in the near future.

Please note that the CAP IFC comment period has not been suspended and CMS will continue to accept comments until no later than 5PM on September 6, 2005 as stated in the IFC. A link to the interim final rule is available at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/providers/drugs/compbid/default.asp>. The process for submitting comments by mail and e-mail is described at the beginning of the rule. We encourage all interested parties to submit comments.

After we are able to analyze the comments and determine how we can best improve the efficiency and attractiveness of the CAP, we anticipate publishing a final rule in late 2005.

We intend to open the bidding for vendors after the publication of this rule. Although we have not yet set a definite timeline, we anticipate that bids would be due to CMS no earlier than 30 days following the publication of the final rule. After the vendors are announced, we will conduct an election period, during which physicians can voluntarily choose to participate in the CAP program and enroll with a particular vendor. At present, we expect that drugs will first be delivered through the CAP by July 2006.

We will continue to provide updates regarding the implementation of CAP through this website and our pharmacy and physician list serves