

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES  
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services  
7500 Security Boulevard  
Baltimore, Maryland 21244-1850



**CENTER FOR DRUG and HEALTH PLAN CHOICE**

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TO: All Part D Sponsors

FROM: Cynthia G. Tudor, Ph.D., Director, Medicare Drug Benefit and C & D Data Group

SUBJECT: Quality Assurance Checks for 2010 Data Submitted for Posting on the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Finder Tool

DATE: July 1, 2009

In anticipation of Part D sponsors preparing to submit their 2010 Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Finder (MPDPF) pricing data files, CMS is providing the list of targeted prescription drug plan quality assurance (QA) analyses that will be performed on these data. Part D sponsors are expected to perform QA for their submitted pricing files to ensure that these files are complete and accurate. Medicare beneficiaries use these data to make informed decisions about their healthcare benefits.

Below are two attachments that outline these data checks. Attachment-A describes the checks that are performed on the required pricing files that are submitted. Attachment-B provides technical specifications for these checks where applicable. QA checks are monitored throughout the year and will be updated as necessary.

All known exceptions that have been granted for the 2009 pricing data submissions will be removed for the 2010 QA analyses. If a Part D sponsor receives an outlier notification for their 2010 pricing data which was previously a known exception in 2009, that sponsor must re-confirm that the data continue to be accurate. If Part D sponsors do not confirm these data, sponsors may have their pricing data suppressed on the MPDPF.

Thank you for your assistance with submitting the most accurate data available for display on the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Finder tool. If you have questions regarding this memo, emails should be directed to [PlanFinderQA@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:PlanFinderQA@cms.hhs.gov).

## Attachment A

### 1. Pharmacy Cost (PC) File

- a. Change in PC Network Size – Determine if the retail pharmacy network size had a 10% or greater change compared to the last submission. This check is conducted for all pharmacies and for in-area pharmacies.
- b. High Dispensing Fees – Evaluate if the file contains dispensing fees greater than \$100.
- c. No PC File Submitted – Determine if a PC file contains zero records.
- d. Invalid Pharmacy Number Format –
  - i. Evaluate pharmacy numbers to ensure they are formatted correctly. The pharmacy number should be 12 digits (10 digit National Provider Identifier (NPI) with a leading one and zero)
  - ii. Check to see if the PC contains National Council for Prescription Drug Programs (NCPDP) numbers
- e. Inconsistent Duplicate PC Record – Check for duplicate Pricing Files listed for one pharmacy in one plan. This check will also report duplicate PC records that have any different PC information (e.g. dispensing fee, preferred status, or mail/retail status) for a given plan and pharmacy.
- f. Missing PC Information – Verify that a plan has active pharmacies.
- g. No Mail Order Pharmacies in the PC File
- h. No Preferred Pharmacies (Retail) – Check if organization's uploaded Plan Benefit Package (PBP) indicates that there are preferred retail pharmacies when none are marked preferred in pharmacy cost file
- i. Exclusion of Non-Preferred (Other) Network Pharmacies (Retail) - Check if a plan's network has preferred retail network pharmacies, then there must also be non-preferred (other) retail network pharmacies
- j. Inclusion of Preferred Pharmacies (Retail) – Check if organization's uploaded PBP indicates that there are only other network retail pharmacies but pharmacy cost file indicates preferred retail pharmacies
- k. Pharmacies Marked As Neither Retail Nor Mail Order – Evaluate if a pharmacy is identified as neither retail nor a mail order pharmacy.
- l. Vaccine Administration Fee Outlier –
  - i. Identify any vaccine administration fee field that is populated with a zero or is left blank.
  - ii. Evaluate each Contract\_ID/Plan\_ID/Segment\_ID/Pharmacy\_Number combination that is associated with a specific Price File id to ensure that each vaccine administration fee field associated with that Price File id has the same vaccine administration fee amount.

### 2. Pricing File (PF)

- a. High Unit Cost – Identify National Drug Codes' (NDC) unit costs that are priced at 25 times greater than highest AWP and 25 times greater than the median price for that NDC.
- b. Low Unit Cost – Identify NDC unit costs that are priced at 25 times less than lowest AWP and 25 times less than the median price for that NDC.
- c. Missing Mail Order Unit Cost – Determine which mail order PF contain NDC(s) missing mail order unit costs.

- d. Missing Retail Unit Cost – Determine which retail PF contain NDC(s) missing retail unit costs.
  - e. Missing Pricing File – Determine if a PF has not been submitted.
  - f. No Active Pricing File – Identify contracts that have only submitted non-active pricing file IDs.
  - g. PC and PF Mismatch – Identify PF IDs that are expected but have not been submitted. The expected PF IDs are extrapolated from the PC file.
  - h. PF Unit Cost Discrepancy – Specify if the unit cost field is missing in the PF.
  - i. Potential Brand Priced at Generic – Check products where the brand price is less than or equal to the generic price (The QA will flag contracts where this potential issue occurs with 10 or more NDCs).
  - j. Pricing file with duplicate NDC records (different unit costs) – Determine if the PF contains duplicate NDC records with different unit costs.
3. Pricing File (PF) and Formulary File (FF)
- a. PF/FF Mismatch – Determine if the PF is missing pricing for reference NDCs found in the last approved FF.
4. Pricing File (PF) and Excluded Drug File (EDF)
- a. PF/EDF Mismatch – Determine if the PF is missing pricing for NDCs identified in the submitted EDF.

Attachment B

EXCEPTION LIST FOR PART D PLAN COMPARE WEBSITE DATA SUBMISSION

1. PHARMACY COST (PC) FILE

- a. High Dispensing Fees  
BRAND\_DISPENSING\_FEE>100 or GENERIC\_DISPENSING\_FEE>100
- b. Change in PC Network Size

$$\left| \frac{P_2 - P_1}{P_1} \right| > 0.10$$

where

$P_2$  is the total number of pharmacies in the current submission

$P_1$  is the total number of pharmacies in the prior submission

- c. Pharmacies Marked as Neither Retail Nor Mail Order  
PHARMACY\_RETAIL = 0 AND PHARMACY\_MAIL = 0
- d. Vaccine Administration Fee Outlier  
VACCINE\_ADMINISTRATION\_FEE = 0

2. PRICING FILE (PF)

- a. High Unit Cost
  - RETAIL=1 and UNIT\_COST>25\*AWP\_MAX and (UNIT\_COST / UNIT\_COST\_MEDIAN > 25)
  - MAIL=1 and unit\_cost\_90>25\*AWP\_MAX and (UNIT\_COST\_90 / UNIT\_COST\_MEDIAN\_90 > 25)
- b. Low Unit Cost
  - RETAIL=1 and UNIT\_COST<1/25\*AWP\_MIN and (UNIT\_COST / UNIT\_COST\_MEDIAN < 1/25)
  - MAIL=1 and UNIT\_COST\_90<1/25\*AWP\_MIN (UNIT\_COST\_90 / UNIT\_COST\_MEDIAN\_90 < 1/25)