

Part C&D Weekly Bulletin

for the week ending May 5, 2006

Announcements:

- On Friday May 5, 2006, three new weeks of data will be added to the Call Center Performance Metrics module in HPMS. This update will include call center data through April 26, 2006.
- Training for the CTM will be made available to all Plans on May 12, 2006. This program will be accessible by satellite and web cast beginning at 1:00 p.m. EST. More information regarding this training is available on the registration website at <http://cms.distributedclassroom.org/>.

Redesign of the Medicare Personal Plan Finder (1)

Subject: Planned changes to the Medicare Plan Finder

File Name: MPPF_Input_Memo.pdf, Attachment A.pdf, Attachment B.pdf, Attachment C.pdf, Attachment D.pdf, Attachment E.pdf

Summary: I am pleased to provide you with the opportunity to become involved in an exciting change planned for the Medicare Personal Plan Finder (MPPF) on www.medicare.gov. The MPPF allows Medicare beneficiaries to compare their Medicare health coverage options. The tool includes information on Original Medicare, Medigap policies, and Medicare Health Plans. You can see the current version of the MPPF at www.medicare.gov/MPPF/. Attached are several documents, for your review. We would appreciate receiving any comments on the attachments by **Wednesday, May 24, 2006**. Please send all comments to compchart@cms.hhs.gov.

Over-the-Counter benefits for Medicare Part C (1)

Subject: Inclusion of OTC benefits

File Name: OTC.pdf

Summary: For calendar year 2007, effective January 1, 2007, Part C Medicare Advantage Plans and Medicare Advantage-Prescription Drug (MA-PD) plans may cover OTC benefits as either a Mandatory supplemental benefit or an Optional supplemental benefit. If you need additional information, please contact Lavern Ware at Lavern.Ware@cms.hhs.gov or by calling 410-786-5480.

Part D Marketing (1)

Subject: Marketing Material Submission

File Name: MemoMarketingMaterialSubmission_05.05.06.pdf

Summary: Organizations are reminded to carefully evaluate all marketing materials to ensure completeness and accuracy during development, as well as submitting materials to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) under the appropriate material category and code.

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Part D Policy (3):

Subject: Incorrect Cost Sharing Charges to Dual Eligible Beneficiaries

File Names: MemoIncorrectCopaysforDuals_05.05.06.pdf

Subject: CMS has received numerous complaints concerning full benefit dual eligible beneficiaries being charged incorrect co-payments at the pharmacy. We are aware that a number of factors are contributing to the incorrect cost sharing for full benefit dual eligible individuals, including the lags associated with the scheduled reporting of information from the State to CMS, delays in Part D plans updating their systems, CMS's prior instruction to the States to report only current or prospective changes to beneficiary institutional status, and confusion in the long-term care provider community regarding when an institutionalized beneficiary qualifies for a zero copayment.

Subject: Misc. Part D Policy Questions and Answers

File Name: QAsPartDPolicy_05.05.06.pdf

Questions: Can a plan establish a generic-use incentive program permitting zero (or reduced) copays on first generic fills if an enrollee agrees to use the generic rather than the brand-name version of a medication?

Can plans establish cost-sharing tiers within their formularies for drugs that treat specific diseases?

What should an individual do if he or she is able to obtain a better price on a covered Part D drug at the point of sale than the negotiated price charged by his or her Part D plan if he/she is in the coverage gap? Will that lower amount at the point of sale count toward the enrollee's TrOOP balance?

Systems (1)

Subject: COB Contact in HPMS

File Name: MemoCOBContact_05.05.06.pdf

Summary: This memorandum serves to alert Part D plans that we have created a Coordination of Benefits (COB) contact field in HPMS. We are asking that plans populate this field (located at "Contract Management>Contact Information>Contact Data") by close of business, Friday, May 12.