



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Region 10
2201 Sixth Avenue, MS/RX-40
Seattle, Washington 98121

May 15, 2006

Dear Tribal Leader,

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has worked closely throughout this past year with the Indian Health Service to train and prepare their area staff to assist American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Medicare beneficiaries to take advantage of the Prescription Drug Benefit. We are coming quickly on the May 15 deadline for beneficiaries to enroll during the initial enrollment period.

Although there were some glitches at the beginning of the enrollment period, CMS is confident these have been resolved. It's our understanding that during this time period, some Tribal governments stepped in to pay for their tribal members Part D prescription drug costs when individuals lacked enrollment verification. We want to thank you for this extra effort and to ensure you are reimbursed by the appropriate Prescription Drug Plan (PDP).

On April 12, 2006, CMS notified PDPs that Tribes are entitled to seek compensation from the PDP once enrollment of the Tribal individual in their Plan is confirmed. You are to submit claims information to the PDP and upon receipt of this letter have the next few months to do so. Acceptable claims information can be in the form of payment receipts received from the participating pharmacy. Receipts along with a copy of this letter are to be submitted to the PDP your Tribal member has enrolled in. The name of the responsible PDP and contact information can be obtained from the Tribal member's PDP enrollment card.

Again, I want to thank you for your efforts to ensure your Tribal members can take advantage of the Prescription Drug Coverage benefit. Should you need additional assistance, you may work with the Native American Contact at your CMS Regional Office. The Native American Contact for the Seattle Regional Office is: Ernie Kimball and can be reached at 206.615.2428.

Respectfully,

R. J. Ruff, Jr., FAAME/CHE
Regional Administrator

cc: Alaska Area IHS Director
Portland Area IHS Director
Alaska Native Health Board Director
Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board Director
Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium Director
Urban Indian Health Program Directors
Tribal Health Directors
HIS Principal Pharmacy Consultant