

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services



The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has posted an updated [Medicare FFS Version 5010 835 Health Care Claim Payment/Advice Companion Guide](#) to the [Medicare FFS Companion Guides](#) web page.

MLN Matters® Number: MM8086

Related Change Request (CR) #: 8086

Related CR Release Date: November 2, 2012

Effective Date: April 1, 2013

Related CR Transmittal #: R11400TN

Implementation Date: April 1, 2013

### Termination of the Common Working File ELGB Provider Query

Note: MM8086 was revised on April 3, 2014, to add a reference to MLN Matters® article MM8248 (<http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/MM8248.pdf>) to alert providers and suppliers that similar non-HIPAA-compliant Common Working File ELGA, ELGH, HIQA, HIQH, and HUQA Part A provider queries have also been terminated. All other information is unchanged.

### Provider Types Affected

This MLN Matters® Article is intended for physicians, other providers, and suppliers submitting claims to Medicare contractors (carriers, Durable Medical Equipment Medicare Administrative Contractors (DME/MACs), and Part B Medicare Administrative Contractors (B MACs) for services to Medicare beneficiaries.

### Provider Action Needed

This article is based on Change Request (CR) 8086 which informs Medicare contractors about the changes being made to eliminate the ELGB (eligibility) query. See the Background and Additional Information Sections of this article for further details regarding these changes.

#### Disclaimer

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## Background

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Medicare providers use the Common Working File (CWF) ELGB query to obtain Medicare beneficiary information. However, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) must eliminate this query capability because the ELGB query is not HIPAA compliant because the incoming query and the outgoing response are not in X12 format. CMS is required by HIPAA to use the proper format when exchanging this information with any covered entity, which applies to all users of this query. As a result, CMS is eliminating this query. They can no longer support the approach of allowing providers online access to CWF non-HIPAA compliant data.

While the CWF ELGB query is discontinued, other query capabilities, such as the HIPAA Eligibility Transaction System (HETS), are available. More information on HETS is available at <http://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/CMS-Information-Technology/HETSHelp/index.html> on the CMS website. You may also use your Medicare contractor's Integrated Voice Response (IVR) System or their Web portal.

## Additional Information

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The official instruction, CR8086 issued to your carrier, DME MAC, and B MAC regarding this change may be viewed at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Transmittals/Downloads/R1140OTN.pdf> on the CMS website.

If you have any questions, please contact your carrier, DME MAC, or B MAC at their toll-free number, which may be found at <http://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Monitoring-Programs/provider-compliance-interactive-map/index.html> on the CMS website.

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