



News Flash - Your Medicare Payments Could Be Reduced If The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Needs To Collect Overdue Taxes That You Owe - The Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997, Section 1024, authorizes the IRS to reduce certain federal payments, including Medicare payments, to allow collection of overdue taxes. Should you owe such taxes and your payments are reduced, your remittance advice will reflect a provider level adjustment code (PLB) of "WU" in the PLB03-1 data field. For more information, please see MLN Matters Article #MM6125 available at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/MM6125.pdf> on the CMS website.

MLN Matters Number: MM6193

Related Change Request (CR) #: 6193

Related CR Release Date: September 19, 2008

Effective Date: October 1, 2008

Related CR Transmittal #: R1600CP

Implementation Date: October 6, 2008

Medicare Part A Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) Prospective Payment System (PPS) Pricer Update FY 2009

Provider Types Affected

Skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) submitting claims to Medicare contractors (Fiscal Intermediaries (FIs) and/or Part A/B Medicare Administrative Contractors (A/B MACs)) for services paid under the SNF PPS.

Impact on Providers

This article is a reminder that the SNF PPS rates are updated annually.

Background

Annual updates to the PPS rates are required by §1888(e) of the Social Security Act, as amended by the Medicare, Medicaid, and SCHIP Balanced Budget Refinement Act of 1999 (the BBRA), and the Medicare, Medicaid and SCHIP Benefits Improvement and Protection Act of 2000 (the BIPA) and the Medicare

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Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 (the MMA), relating to Medicare payments and consolidated billing for SNFs.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will publish the SNF payment rates for FY 2009 and those rates will be effective as of October 1, 2008. The rates will be published in the **Federal Register** before that date.

Key Points of CR 6193

- The Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 SNF payment rates will be effective October 1, 2008, through September 30, 2009.
- The update methodology is identical to that used in the previous year and will include the MMA reimbursement for beneficiaries with AIDS.
- The statute mandates an update to the Federal rates using the latest SNF full market basket.

Additional Information

To see the official instruction (CR6193) issued to your Medicare A/B MACs and carriers visit <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/Transmittals/downloads/R1600CP.pdf> on the CMS website.

If you have questions, please contact your Medicare A/B MAC or FI at their toll-free number which may be found at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/CallCenterTollNumDirectory.zip> on the CMS website.

News Flash - Flu Shot Reminder - Flu Season Is Coming! It's not too early to start vaccinating as soon as you receive vaccine. Encourage your patients to get a flu shot as it is still their best defense against the influenza virus. *(Medicare provides coverage of the flu vaccine without any out-of-pocket costs to the Medicare patient. No deductible or copayment/coinsurance applies.)* And don't forget, health care workers also need to protect themselves. **Get Your Flu Shot. – Not the Flu.**
Remember - Influenza vaccine plus its administration are covered Part B benefits. Note that influenza vaccine is NOT a Part D covered drug. For information about Medicare's coverage of the influenza virus vaccine and its administration as well as related educational resources for health care professions and their staff, visit http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/Downloads/flu_products.pdf on the CMS website. To order, free of charge, a quick reference chart on Medicare Part B Immunization Billing, go to http://cms.meridianksi.com/kc/main/kc_frame.asp?kc_ident=kc0001&loc=5 on the CMS website.

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