



Related MLN Matters Article #: MM5971

Date Posted: April 11, 2008

Related CR #: 5971

Change Request (CR) 5550 Clarification - Signature Requirements

Key Words

MM5971, CR5971, R248PI, CR5550, Clarification, Signature

Provider Types Affected

Physicians and other providers who bill Medicare Carriers, Fiscal Intermediaries (FIs), Regional Home Health Intermediaries (RHHIs), Part A/B Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs), including Durable Medical Equipment MACs (DME MACs) for care provided to Medicare beneficiaries in hospice

Key Points

- The effective date of the instruction is September 3, 2007.
- The implementation date is April 28, 2008.
- *Medicare Program Integrity Manual* Chapter 3 (Verifying Potential Errors and Taking Corrective Actions), Subsection 3.4.1.1B (Signature Requirements) notes that Medicare contractors require a legible identifier for services provided/ordered.
- When this documentation is for medical review purposes, the only acceptable method of documenting the provider signature is by written or an electronic signature. Stamp signatures are not acceptable to sign an order or other medical record documentation for medical review purposes.
- Change Request (CR) 5971 provides an exception to this requirement.
- It announces that a facsimile of an original written or electronic signature is acceptable for the certification of terminal illness for hospice.
- Providers should note that while a signature facsimile is acceptable in this instance, both the signature facsimile and **hard copies of a physician's electronic signature** must be present in the patient's medical record.

Important Links

The related MLN Matters article can be found at

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/MM5971.pdf> on the CMS website.

The official instruction (CR5971) regarding this change may be viewed at

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/Transmittals/downloads/R248PI.pdf> on the CMS website.

CR5550 may be found at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/transmittals/downloads/R220PI.pdf> on the CMS website.

If providers have questions regarding this issue, they may contact their carrier, FI, RHH I, A/B MAC, including DME MAC at their toll-free number, which may be found at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/CallCenterTollNumDirectory.zip> on the CMS website.