

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services 7500
Security Boulevard Baltimore, Maryland 21244-1850



**Center for Medicare
Office of Information Services**

DATE: May12, 2011

TO: All Medicare Advantage, Prescription Drug Plan, Cost, PACE, and
Demonstration Organizations

FROM: Cheri Rice /s/
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SUBJECT: Important Change Notice of AT&T/MDCN switch to Verizon Business Network
Services (VBNS)

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) awarded Verizon Business with the contract to provide data communication services for all of its Operating Divisions via the Networkx contract. The Networkx program serves as the primary replacement for the FTS 2001 and FTS 2001 Crossover contracts set to expire Thursday, June 30, 2011. As a result, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is required to transition all current Wide Area Network (WAN) circuit connectivity that communicates directly with CMS from AT&T to Verizon Business Networkx Services (VBNS).

To support the VBNS transition, CMS and Verizon Business have implemented a new Extranet WAN design which enables CMS external business partners (EBP) such as banks, clearinghouses, Managed Advantage Organizations (MAO), Prescription Drug Sponsors (PDP), Coordination of Beneficiary Services (COBS) and other CMS contractors to access the necessary applications and information required for their continued CMS business functions.

Although not related to the VBNS transition, AT&T is retiring their MDNS (Managed Data Network Service) also known as AGNS (AT&T Global Network Service) effective Friday, July 1, 2011.

Due to the complexities related to transitioning from the AT&T MDNS service to Verizon and to avoid delays, it is recommended that MAO/PDPs with current connectivity to the AT&T MDNS contact their Network Service Vendor (NSV) directly for questions related to maintaining service (i.e. IVANS, McKesson, or AT&T)

Service and technical requirements for a NSV connection are not necessarily the same as Verizon connectivity requirements, but in most cases, the NSV already has connectivity to the VBNS.

Please direct questions to the MAPD Help Desk at mapdhelp@cms.hhs.gov or 1-800-927-8069.