CMS/
CENTERS for MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
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MEDICARE PLAN ACCOUNTABILITY GROUP

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

FROM: Cynthia E. Moreno, Acting Director, Medicare Plan Accountability Group

DATE: February 18, 2005

SUBJECT: Contract Year 2006 Plan Benefit Package/Summary of Benefits Testing

We would like to express our appreciation for the comments and suggestions provided as part of the alpha Plan Benefit Package (PBP) / Summary of Benefits (SB) testing in January 2005. CMS has used those comments as well as feedback obtained throughout the course of the year to implement our changes to the PBP/SB software for Contract Year (CY) 2006.

We are now conducting testing to ensure that all aspects of the 2006 PBP software work as designed, including the generation of the SB sentences. As with past years, we are requesting your assistance in the final testing of the 2006 PBP/SB. Your input has been critical to the development of the 2006 PBP/SB, and we strongly encourage you to participate in this testing process. **Testing will take place from Monday, February 21, 2005 to Friday, March 4, 2005**. You may download the test CY 2006 PBP software, detailed list of CY 2006 PBP/SB changes, list of CY 2006 SB sentences, CY 2006 PBP/SB crosswalk for Part D questions/sentences, and SB Introduction Templates at the following test website:

http://hpmstest.fu.com/test/pbp2006_beta/pbpbeta_start.asp

Please do not insert a "www" in front of this URL.

The test 2006 PBP is being made available on the Internet. As a result, you do not need to access this site via the HPMS on the Medicare Data Communications Network (MDCN). For technical assistance with downloading and installing the test PBP 2006, please call the HPMS Help Desk at 1-800-220-2028.

It is extremely important that you pay close attention to the instructions for downloading in order to preserve your production CY 2005 PBP data.

Once you have completed your testing, you should access the website (listed above) to submit your comments and/or error reports to CMS. For comments, you will be asked to provide the PBP Section/Function and corresponding comment. For errors, you will be asked to provide the PBP Section/Function, the PBP question, the error message received, whether the error could be duplicated, and the order of events leading up to the error. CMS will use this information to correct the errors and make critical changes to the system before deployment.

If you have difficulties accessing the website listed above to submit your comments and/or error reports, CMS will also accept this information via e-mail at hpms@nerdvana.fu.com by the same due date. Please indicate "**PBP/SB 2006 Beta Testing Comments"** in the subject line.

By either method, we must receive your testing results by **COB on Friday, March 4, 2005** in order to complete the PBP 2006 software for its production release on April 8, 2005.

Thank you for your assistance with the final testing phase of the PBP 2006. We welcome your comments and feedback so that we may continue to improve the PBP/SB.