

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
Center for Beneficiary Choices
7500 Security Boulevard, Mail Stop C4-23-07
Baltimore, Maryland 21244-1850



Date: April 19, 2006

To: Medicare Advantage Organizations, Medicare Cost Plans, Prescription Drug Plans

From: David A. Lewis, Acting Director, Medicare Advantage Group
Cynthia Tudor, Acting Director, Medicare Drug Benefit Group

Re: CY 2006 Customer and Provider Telephone Contact Standards

CMS has received several inquiries regarding the current CY 2006 Customer and Provider Telephone Contact Standards for Medicare Advantage Organizations (MA), Medicare Advantage Organizations offering prescription drug plans (MA-PDs), Medicare Cost Plans, and Prescription Drug Plan (PDP) Sponsors.

Currently, all Part D sponsors (including PDP Sponsors, MA-PD Organizations, and Cost Plan Sponsors offering Part D Plans) must comply with the call center requirements stated in the HPMS notice issued on February 23, 2006. The chart attached to the notice describes performance standards for customer support lines for prospective and current enrollees, pharmacy technical support lines, and lines dedicated to provider inquiries concerning Part D exceptions and appeals. These standards continue until the start of the annual enrollment period, November 15, 2006, when the standards included in the 2007 Call Letters will apply.

The 2006 MA application requires Medicare Advantage Organizations to have a mechanism available to respond to beneficiary inquiries and provide services to plan members. These requirements also continue.