

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
Center for Beneficiary Choices
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PLAN OVERSIGHT & ACCOUNTABILITY GROUP

DATE: September 7, 2007

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

FROM: Cynthia E. Moreno, Director

SUBJECT: Contract Year 2009 Plan Benefit Package Alpha Testing

Due to changes in the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) clearance timeline, CMS must begin testing of the Contract Year (CY) 2009 Plan Benefit Package (PBP) on an earlier schedule than in past years.

The first opportunity for industry participation will be the PBP alpha testing phase. CMS will be conducting alpha testing of the CY 2009 PBP from **Monday, September 10, 2007 through Friday, September 14, 2007.**

For this testing phase, CMS will provide screenshots of the CY 2009 PBP for your review and comment. Please note that the alpha testing phase will not cover the Summary of Benefits (SB). You may download the draft CY 2009 PBP screenshots and a detailed list of current CY 2009 PBP changes at the following test website: http://hpmstest.fu.com/test/pbp2009_alpha/home.html

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

Once you have reviewed the CY 2009 PBP draft materials, please submit your comments to CMS via the same website address as noted above. You will be asked to identify the PBP Section and your corresponding comment. If you have difficulties accessing this website, CMS will also accept your feedback via e-mail at hpms@cms.hhs.gov by the same due date. Please indicate “**CY 2009 PBP Alpha Testing Comments**” in the subject line.

By either method, we must receive your comments by **COB on Friday, September 14, 2007.**

In addition to alpha testing, CMS will conduct two phases of beta testing of the CY 2009 PBP/SB. These phases are tentatively scheduled for November 2007 and February 2008. Further guidance on these beta testing opportunities will be provided at a later time. Your input is critical to the development of the CY 2009 PBP/SB, and we strongly encourage your participation in all phases of the testing process.

If you have any questions, you may contact Sara Walters at sara.walters@cms.hhs.gov or at 410-786-3330. Thank you for your assistance with the alpha testing phase of the CY 2009 PBP/SB.