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**DATE:** September 4, 2020

**TO:** All Prescription Drug Plans, Medicare Advantage-Prescription Drug Plans, Section 1876 Cost Plans, Medicare-Medicaid Plans, and PACE plans

**FROM:** Amy Larrick Chavez-Valdez, Director  
Medicare Drug Benefit and C & D Data Group

**SUBJECT:** CY 2021 September Formulary Enhancement Submission Window

CMS is offering a final CY 2021 formulary submission window that will permit plans to submit formulary enhancements to CMS prior to the start of the 2021 contract year. While Part D sponsors may enhance their formularies at any time, including prior to the start of the contract year, we are offering this additional window to allow another opportunity for plans to submit formulary changes in order that the Medicare Plan Finder (MPF) displays accurate and up-to-date formulary information during the Annual Election Period (AEP). Enhancements, which include the addition of a Part D drug, the movement of a formulary drug to a lower cost-sharing tier, and the removal of utilization management (UM) requirements, can be implemented immediately by a Part D sponsor. Plan sponsors are reminded to evaluate the CY 2021 FRF to ensure the inclusion of drugs within the protected classes that would be required for January 1, 2021.

Part D sponsors may submit their CY 2021 formulary updates between **12:00 a.m. EDT September 21, 2020 and 5:00 p.m. EDT on September 23, 2020**. An updated CY 2021 formulary reference file (FRF) will be available within the CY 2021 HPMS Formulary Submission Module by close of business on September 16, 2020. In addition to the inclusion of RXCUIs that are new to the FRF, Part D sponsors will be permitted to submit other enhancements that have been made to their formulary since the August formulary update window. However, since the Part D bid that was submitted to and approved by CMS would have reflected the formulary submitted as part of the bid, we do not expect to see a significant number of enhancements for a given formulary.

New step therapy (ST) or prior authorization (PA) group descriptions can be added to drugs new to the FRF. PA or ST criteria updates, however, will not occur during this submission. Annual PA and ST review concerns will be communicated in the upcoming weeks. Please note that generic substitutions made in accordance with §423.120(b)(5)(iv) should also be submitted during this window.

If you have any questions regarding this formulary enhancement window, please email [PartDFormularies@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:PartDFormularies@cms.hhs.gov).