

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
New Medicare Card Project
Special Open Door Forum
Moderator: Jill Darling
March 20, 2018
2:00 p.m. ET

Operator: Good afternoon. My name is (Amy) and I will be your conference facilitator today. At this time, I would like to welcome everyone to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, New Medicare Card Project Special Open Door Forum.

All lines have been placed on mute to prevent any background noise. After the speaker's remarks, there will be a question-and-answer session.

If you would ask a question during this time, please press star then the number one on your telephone keypad. If you would like to withdraw your question, please press the pound key. I would not like to turn the call to Jill Darling. Please go ahead.

Jill Darling: Thank you, (Amy). Good morning and good afternoon everyone. I'm Jill Darling in the CMS Office of Communications and welcome to today's Special Open Door Forum for the New Medicare Card Project.

We greatly appreciate your patience. We had hundreds and hundreds of people dial in to get answer -- ask their questions, so we thank you very much for your patience.

So before we -- before I hand it off to (Lois) I had one brief announcement, this Special Open Door Forum is not intended for the press and the remarks are not considered on the record if you are a member of the press you may listen in but please refrain from asking questions during the Q&A portion of today's call. If you have any inquiries please contact CMS at press@cms.hhs.gov and now I'll hand the call to (Lois).

(Lois): Hello everyone, thank you so much for joining us today to talk about the new Medicare card project. We have a special open-door forum and discussion planned.

We as most of you, hopefully now, we are less than two weeks out from our April 1 transition into the new Medicare card and number. We wanted to take this time as we are so close to go live to answer questions. So we really do not have a presentation to give to you today.

We've been trying to do our best in making sure that we have presented this information over a several different forums and conferences. And we thought today would be a good time just to let you bring questions to us.

So we have subject matter experts in the room to take your questions. And we really just wanted to open it up to the call participants. So if we want to get started, one question.

Operator: As a reminder ladies and gentlemen, if you would like to ask a question, please go ahead and press star then the number one on your telephone keypad. If you would like to withdraw your question, you may press the pound key.

Please limit your questions to one question and one follow-up to allow the participants time for questions. If you require any further follow-up you may again press star one to rejoin the queue. Your first question today comes from the line of (Mary Anne Young) of Western Tidewater. Your line is open.

(Mary Anne Young): I have a claim question for services provided prior to April 1. We would use the old Medicare number to bill, correct? For services provided after, would we use the -- we would use the new Medicare number. It is my assumption. Would that like cross over at all? I mean do we -- with the new Medicare number work to bill on any claims prior to April 1?

(Tricia Rodgers): If you bill -- hi, this is (Tricia Rodgers), thanks for that question. So you can use the old HICN or the new MBI starting April 1 through December 31, 2019 for and submit a claim and it will process that way.

For claims that our submitted after April 1, again you can use the HICN or the MBI and that is for dates of service received -- claims received on April 1st. So you gave two different scenarios so I wanted to make sure that you got the answer to your -- both of your questions.

(Mary Anne Young): So what I understand that we can use either the old HIC number or the new MBI number for anything from April 1st forward.

(Tricia Rodgers): Yes and then starting in January 1, 2020, it's the MBI that Medicare Beneficiary Identifier, the new Medicare number only.

(Mary Anne Young): OK. Thank you very much.

(Tracey Mackey): And just to add to that for clarification. That's based on receipt date, not date of service. So claims received April 1st and after with either the HICN or the MBI.

(Mary Anne Young): OK. OK, so based on the claim receipt date by you. Receipt date, OK.

(Tricia Rodgers): Thank you.

(Mary Anne Young): Thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes in the line of (Kurt Lance) of Capital Health Plan, your line is open.

(Kurt Lance): Hi, I with a pair and we received the (inaudible) file that was sent on March 4th but I understood there were supposed to be some instructions with that file and I have not located any instructions. Can you tell me where they would be found?

Jill Darling: Is (Erin) wants to respond?

(Erinn Shockey): Hi, this is (Erinn Shockey), we didn't send any instructions with the file. We've provided information on the file in our software release memos in HPMS, was there any specific questions you have about the file?

(Kurt Lance): Well, I may have misunderstood. I was at the HMNS conference and (Monica Kay) did a presentation on the new Medicare card and I've asked about it and I thought the instructions were to include some information like we are to share that MBIs with our members that we need to just wait for our members to receive their new Medicare card before they know what their number is. Is that sounds like I understand? Am I right or wrong?

(Erinn Shockey): Yes, I'll pass that that question off but I think we have provided that guidance elsewhere. Does anyone else want to weigh in on that topic?

Female: So just to let everyone know, we are in the process of uploading the updated FAQs to our Medicare new card website on cms.gov. It's cms.gov/new cards. Hopefully, within the next week or two, we will have these FAQs on the site and they will include instructions about and guidance about sharing.

(Kurt Lance): And I think though if there's going to be any other instructions for payers since we have like third party vendors then that we give that information or eligibility information to. We didn't know if we should start sending that MBI on those files or not.

Female: That will also be on the FAQs that will be up shortly. So keep looking out for that.

(Kurt Lance): OK, I will do. Thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Linda Napsen) of St. Luke's Health, your line is open.

(Linda Napsen): Thank you. I've asked this question a couple of times in various formats but we currently have trouble getting the patient's HIC number when they are a Medicare advantage patient.

So they've got care improvement or well care or any of the MCO payers and we have to bill Medicare for the services they rendered, their hospice or excuse me or they're enrolled in a research protocol. The patients are more

than reluctant to provide us their current HIC number much less going forward their MBI number.

I've seen the commercials on TV and they're encouraged to not share because of the probability of fraud but the problem comes in is that we're getting some of MCOs will not give us that information either, even though there's clearance instructions from both CMS and Novitas, in our case, to bill Medicare, we can't get the number to bill Medicare with. How will we get that information going forward if the patient won't give us their MBIs if they got an MCO and the pair won't either?

(Tricia Rodgers): Hi, thanks for that question. This is (Tricia Rodgers). So there's a couple of different ways that this can happen.

If the patient won't give it to you, although I will say that in the letters that accompany the new Medicare card, there is a statement in there that says something to the effect of if you have a Medicare Advantage Plan, please note that you may be asked to present your -- this new card when you go -- have like hospital visit or another type of inpatient or facility visit.

So that will be in the letter that goes to the Medicare beneficiary. If they won't share it with you or you don't have that coordination with the plan to get the new MBI, it sounds like you already have a relationship with Novitas which is one of our Medicare Administrative Contractors or MAC.

And in that case, you can -- beginning in June, you can go into the MAC secure portal and do a lookup on that particular beneficiary using the beneficiary's first name, last name, date of birth and Social Security Number and if the card has been mailed then the secure lookup portal will return the MBI and you can get it that way.

(Linda Napsen): OK. So that's good. So the follow up -- so is there a possibility of getting the copy of the letter so that we can reference that if the patient questions us?

(Tricia Rodgers): We will be putting a copy of the letter that's going to be going to the beneficiaries on our website starting in April when Medicare (inaudible)

(Linda Napsen): Excellent. Thank you very much.

(Tricia Rodgers): You're welcome.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Erin Fisher) of Fine Medicare Plan. Your line is open.

(Erin Fisher): Hello. This is a question about enrollment into Medicare and a Medicare supplement or advantage or prescription plan.

Many people called the last couple of days of the month and they need to be on Medicare the first of the month and we have to fill out the enrollment applications for them and number one is it correct that between now and April of 2019, we can use their Social Security Number and if that is not correct, what number would we use the put on their application for a prescription Medicare Advantage or Supplement Plan?

(Tricia Rodgers): So this is (Tricia Rodgers) again and others feel free to jump in. For Medicare enrollment, you either have to have their health insurance claim number, their HICN or their MBI during the transition period. Starting January 1st, 2020, you'll need to have the MBI for them to enroll.

I mentioned a few different ways already that the providers can get access to the MBI if the patient doesn't have her can't bring their new card with them and there are other ways that beneficiaries can also get their MBI through the MyMedicare.gov portal. They'll also get it in the mail and so hopefully, they will have that information for you when you go to help them enroll.

(Erin Fisher): So a follow-up, if the person is fired the last day of the month and they go to the Social Security Office to register for Medicare and they also come to an insurance agent to enroll the Medicare plan and its 2020. So what if they're -- you know, they go in December 31st and we have to fill out the form and we don't have their MBI number and they don't have it.

(Tricia Rodgers): Well, in case we would just hope that the beneficiary has enrolled in the MyMedicare.gov portal and can have access to look it up themselves. I mean

it's really it's -- this is on the beneficiary to have all the information they need to enroll in the plan.

(Erin Fisher): OK, but that's not going to work if the person is over 65. They're not going to have access to that on the same day that they need to enroll in the Medicare drug plan the next day or whatever plan they want, unless the carriers are just going to take the applications without any MBI number.

(Tricia Rodgers): So we appreciate you bringing this -- to bring this up. This is something that during that -- during the transition, you will be able use the HICN or the MBI and we will look -- we've heard this -- I've heard it one other time before so it's something that we have on our list to look at during the transition period.

But we do know that it takes at least a day for our beneficiary to get access to the [MyMedicare.gov] portal and so if they haven't registered before, you know a delay on their part, I hear what you're saying.

I think you know, we'll have to do a lot of education to beneficiaries so that they know what they need to bring with them. In the meantime, we'll also look at other ways we can -- we can help these folks who don't bring it with them. And I think others are going to chime in here.

(Diana Arabian): Yes and this is (Diana Arabian). This is also -- this is also something that we can you know target beneficiaries, newly eligible ones, to encourage them not to wait for the last day of the month so we can incorporate our outreach going forward.

(Erin Fisher): Yes, but the people that are losing their jobs don't have -- that wouldn't apply to them. You can't outreach to them if they're losing their job.

(Tricia Rodgers): OK, thank you.

(Erin Fisher): OK, thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of Christina Stella of Mat-Su Regional Medical. Your line is open.

Christina Stella: My question is after January 2020, we have to use the MBI but if the patient comes in to the facility and does not have their MBI number, will we still be able to use their Social Security Number to look up the MBI number on the Medicare common working file or in our case, the WPS website.

(Tricia Rodgers): And so in the MAC portal, not the website, you have to go into the secure portal but yes, that portal is available. All MAC portals will be available beyond the end of the transition period. So you'll have access to that with the beneficiary's first name, last name, date of birth and Social Security number.

Christina Stella: OK, so we'll always of people always social security number to look up the MBI number but we have to bill the MBI number after January 2020.

I just want to make sure that because sometimes people will come in incapacitated and they don't have their stuff with them but we may have their Social Security Number, look at somewhere else and therefore, we can look it up and get the MBI because we have previous information but that was our question, just you know the Social Security Number being able to look up.

(Trisha Rogers): Yes [with the other 3 data elements].

Christina Stella: OK, thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Pat Drake) of Fairview Homecare, your line is open.

(Pat Drake): Thank you. I'd like to ask do any of the new enrollees in Medicare. Have they already received their MBI numbers if they were -- do they enroll by April 1st of 2018?

(Tricia Rodgers): No, they haven't. For those who are eligible starting April 1st, they've already received a card with a HICN and they will receive a replacement card with a new MBI during the normal mailing process that described on the webpage.

(Pat Drake): All right and my follow-up is then when can I expect to see the MBI numbers from our Medicare enrollees and we are looking at it -- asking for them now

in April. Can you give some guidance on that? Is April too soon to be asking for the MBI numbers?

(Tricia Rodgers): It could start as early as April. So certainly, you should always ask but you know it'll start in April and then move -- as we move forward that will pick up and you'll start seeing it as we progress.

(Pat Drake): Thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Jamie Kissell) of Multicare, your line is open.

(Jamie Kissell): Thank you. Our real-time eligibility vendor has shared that Medicare will not return the MBI when we send a response with using the patient's name and Social Security Number and our registration team required to enter the MBI into the (IME) field for med advantage plans. So my question is does Medicare have any future plans to relax that restriction for real-time eligibility vendors?

(Tricia Rodgers): So this is (Tricia Rodgers), we are not returning the MBI with the HETS eligibility 270-271 transactions unless you use the MBI to do the initial query. For example, if you submit the MBI as part of the query process you will get that back on your 271 response. If you submit the HICN as part of your query, you will get the HICN back on your 271 response.

(Jamie Kissell): Thank you. I have one follow-up question. You're talking about this look up portal, is that the Noridian?

(Tricia Rodgers): Noridian is a MAC and it is at -- it will be at all MAC and so yes. If Noridian is your MAC then you should work with them on making sure you have access to their portal.

(Jamie Kissell): Thank you.

(Tricia Rodgers): You're welcome. Thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Lindy Home) of UMass Memorial Health, your line is open.

(Lindy Home): Hi, first of all, thank you for having this extremely helpful information session. I have a question regarding the old cards. What type of guidance are you giving for getting rid of the old cards? Is there a specific procedure that should be used for destroying the card? Should they be returned to CMS?

(Erin Pressley): This is Erin Pressley in the Office of Communications at CMS. The guidance that we're giving to Medicare beneficiaries with the card when it's mailed is that they should destroy their old card and begin using their new card immediately.

And we're supplementing that advice by saying that they should destroy it in a way that makes the old number, the HICN, unrecognizable. So shred their card, don't put it out in the trash or recycling, or those kinds of things to make sure it's completely destroyed.

(Lindy Home): OK, perfect thank you so much.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Toneta Babbage) of Humana, your line is open.

(Toneta Babbage): Yes, thank you. My question is regards to Maximus. We were wanting to know if Maximus will be updating their system to accept the MBI number.

(Lois Serio): Hi, we're going to have to ask you to send that to the mailbox and that would be one word, newmedicarecardSSNremoval@cms.hhs.gov. Thank you.

(Toneta Babbage): OK. As a follow-up question to that, then what about the utilization screen in MARx. Would there be any changes to that screen?

(Lois Serio): (Erinn), are you able to answer?

(Erinn Shockey): I am, yes. So in MARx on the user interface, the banner at the top that has the beneficiary demographics and the HICN will be updated on April 1st to show both the HICN and the MBI. Up in that banner at the top of each screen.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Mary Anne Young) of Western Tidewater, your line is open.

(Mary Anne Young): Will this change affects someone who's got a Medicare Advantage Plan or an HMO, I mean that their advantage plan ID number won't change, will it?

(Lois Serio): You are correct. They still will have the same Medicare advantage plan number that they have today. They will still use the same card they received from their plan. But they will also receive a new Medicare card and the plan may ask for it or when they go into a hospital, they may have to provide that as well.

(Mary Anne Young): Thank you very much.

(Shelley Winston): Yes, hi. This is (Shelley Winston) from (Harden). I just wanted to respond back to the question about Maximus. And I just received confirmation that Maximus will be able to process appeals with either the MBI or the HICN.

Operator: And your next question comes from the line of (Brian Higgins) of Kona Community Hospitals. Your line is open.

(Brian Higgins): Thank you. I was wondering is the formatting of the number, the MBI, always going to be the same, so numeric alpha alphanumeric. Is it always going to be that same order?

(Tricia Rodgers): Yes, thanks for that question. There is on our new Medicare card webpages, there is an example and all the characteristics that surround the new Medicare beneficiary identifier. It's 11 characters long just like the HICN is today.

It's alphanumeric and there are some other defining features that tell you which location will be alpha, which location will be numeric and that we're excluding certain letters that you don't confuse those with numbers and that type of things. So there's a lot of information on the webpages for you to look at and learn all about the MBI characteristics.

(Brian Higgins): So it will be in the same order then.

(Tricia Rodgers): Yes, if you're programming to accept the new MBI, there are certain places that will always be alpha, certain places that will always be numeric.

(Brian Higgins): OK, and you're saying there's a link on your CMS.gov page for that?

(Tricia Rodgers): So yes. If you go to cms.gov/newcard or just do a search for new card, the webpage will come up and that has all the information that we're telling everyone today including what's the new card will look like and discuss the MBI formatting.

(Brian Higgins): Thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes the line of (Lisa Affaf) of Coordinator Radiology, your line is open.

(Lisa Affaf): Hi, I just have a question and maybe it's kind of an answer through all this. If we have a patient, we do authorizations here and we verify all of our patients do have Medicare because some of them don't realize that they have a replacement instead of an actual -- they don't understand -- they think they still have Medicare if they have a replacement.

So I verify through the eligibility verification if they actually have Medicare or not. Will that still be available? And if not going to still be available, will that tell what their new number will be?

(Tricia Rodgers): So you can still check Medicare eligibility through HETS or through a vendor with the HICN, all the way through December 31st, 2019 and that will still give you Medicare eligibility for that patient. Starting January 1st, 2020, you need to have the MBI to check the eligibility.

If you don't have the MBI then you can go into the -- you can get it from the beneficiary or even go into the secure look up portal and use the patient's first name, last name, date of birth and Social Security number and get the MBI and then use that MBI to do the eligibility verification.

(Lisa Affaf): Okay, so you're talking about the security network portal. Are you talking about like the Noridian or you talking about CMS.gov or?

(Tricia Rodgers): Yes [portal].

(Tricia Rodgers): It's through your Medicare Administrator Contractor portal that you use for other things. You bill through there. You check claim status and all of that good stuff.

There will be starting in June a place for -- a user interface for you to go and do a secure look up using the patient's first name, last name, date of birth and Social Security number.

(Lisa Affaf): And you'll have that in one of your press releases or?

(Trisha Rogers): We already have it on-line; we sent letters out and last September and October with information in there. If you didn't get one, then you can go online and look at the sample letter and there's information how to get to your particular MAC portal URL and get registered to make sure that you're all set and ready to go starting in June.

(Lisa Affaf): OK, perfect.

(Tricia Rodgers): It's on the new Medicare -- you're welcome. It's on the new Medicare card webpage.

(Lisa Affaf): OK. Thank you.

(Tricia Rodgers): You're welcome.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Anita Flanagan), your line is open.

(Anita Flanagan): Yes ma'am. How long -- I know that they're not going to be able to send the cards all out at one time so they'll be trickling in. How long do they believe that it's going to take before everybody should have their new cards? And do you know what area they're going to start sending them to first?

(Lois Serio): So we have until April of 2019 to send out all of the cards and we will keep everyone updated as we progressed into the mailing.

(Anita Flanagan): OK. So we're just going to have to keep our patients and ask them did you get -- did you get it right?

(Lois Serio): Yes.

(Anita Flanagan): OK, thank you.

(Erin Pressley): Hello, this is (Erin), I'll just add to that that also on the CMS.gov webpage, we do have that list of states that we will begin the mailings with and we'll continue to update that.

(Anita Flanagan): And that's on the CMS webpage?

(Erin Pressley): Yes. The link is CMS.gov/newcard.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Donna Miller), your line is open.

(Donna Miller): Hi, my question is if we submit the initial claim utilizing the HICN number, can we submit a replacement claim using the MBI?

Tracey Mackey: Hi, this is Tracey Mackey. Yes, so if their initial claim is submitted with the HICN, you can process the adjustment with either HICN or MBI if that's your question.

(Donna Miller): Yes, that is. Thank you.

Operator: Your next question line of (Trisha Miller), your line is open.

(Trisha Miller): Hi, I work for an employer that provides Medicare part D prescription coverage to our retirees and so my question is about those that are aging into Medicare at a future date. So to my understanding right now, if you currently have a HICN, you're going to receive a new MBI card with a new number on it.

So those that are aging and say later this year in December for example, August, September, October, will those individuals receive both a HICN and an MBI number or will they only receive an MBI number?

(Tricia Rodgers): Those individuals will only receive the MBI. Anybody who's getting a new card whether or not they're aging in and getting it three months in advance. So that means maybe they'll eligible in July, they would get it starting in April, will only have an MBI.

(Trisha Miller): OK, thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Cheryl Farr), your line is open.

(Cheryl Farr): Good afternoon, I just -- the question I have is when doing verification of eligibility for Medicare if we use the HICN number, will it provide like -- will it come back with double number? Will it have both a HIC number and the new MBI?

(Tricia Rodgers): It will not. When you check HETS eligibility 270/271, if you submit the HICN along with the other and validating information, it will get -- it will return the HICN and other 271 responses on the eligibility.

If you want to look at the MBI, you will need to go -- you will need to get it either from the patient or you can use the secure look up portal on the Medicare Administrator Contractors secure portals.

(Cheryl Farr): And that will be effective June of 2018?

(Tricia Rodgers): That is right.

(Cheryl Farr): OK, thank you.

(Tricia Rodgers): You're welcome.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of Nancy Carter, your line is open.

Nancy Carter: Yes, Nancy Carter with Capital Health Clinic. We had a lot of eligibility checks due to coordination of benefits for our retirees but aren't going under a retiree advantage, Medicare Advantage Plan.

Currently, I use the MARx system and if it happens to be down, I go into the (111) secure websites to do a beneficiary looked up. And doing that, on the (111), you can put the name, date of birth, gender and social security number, will that system give us the MBI?

(Brian Pabst): Yes, it's (Brian Pabst) from CMS. For section 111, we will give you the MBI through that response only if we know that MBI card has been made up.

Nancy Carter: OK.

(Brian Pabst): But the input to it is not going to be the same as it is today. So if you submit an SSN with the identifying characteristics that will remain the same.

Nancy Carter: OK, and on the MARx, what I'm understanding is if you put in -- if you put in a HIC number, it will only return a HIC number. If you put MBI, it will be MBI.

(Erinn Shockey): This is (Erinn Shockey). On the MARx, are you talking about the MARx user interface?

Nancy Carter: MARx portal.

(Erin Shockey): Yes, so after April 1st, if you put in a HICN, it will return both the HICN and the MBI and vice versa. If you put in an MBI, it'll return both.

Nancy Carter: OK. Thank you very much.

Operator: Your next question comes the line of (Angela McKinney), your line is open.

(Angela McKinney): Hi, on your FAQ that's on the website, it stated that reports incoming and outgoing provider statistical reports and data request would be using the HIC number until further notice. Do you have a date that that would change from using HIC number to using the MBI?

(Tricia Rodgers): No we do not. Not at this time.

(Angela McKinney): So if we send a report request or data request with the MBI, you'd still be able to process that right?

(Tricia Rodgers): That is correct.

(Angela McKinney): Or we have to use -- oh it's so -- OK.

(Tricia Rodgers): You're welcome.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Judy Larry) at Los Angeles County, your line is open.

(Judy Larry): Hello, good morning. The instruction for information about the mailing schedule says that it is determined by state and other factors. We are in wave two which is going to the mail.

The cards are going in the mail starting next month and I was wondering what the other factors were for determining when our residents are going to get their cards.

(Lois Serio): Hi, does Erin want to respond?

(Erin Pressley): Yes.

(Erin Pressley): Sorry, there are two Erins. So this is Erin Pressley. There are a number of other factors that are taken into account. We were using address software and things like that to make sure that we are mailing to good addresses.

Other things that we're taking into account are things like, in addition to address, their beneficiary names and things like that to make sure that there is a logical order to the mailings within the state and that you know it's not completely randomized with an attempt to try to get cards to people in the same household around the same time.

- (Judy Larry): Oh OK, so it's not -- it has nothing to do with like railroad Medicare and/or -- or anything like that. It's just a matter of making sure that you have the right information and trying to cluster families who all have Medicare together. People on the same, yes, generally yes.
- (Erin Pressley): That's correct. So it has nothing to do with the type of eligibility and the beneficiary. And since you mentioned railroad, I will just clarify that the beneficiaries who are eligible through the Railroad Retirement Board, the RRB is mailing and processing those cards. So there are about 500,000 or so Medicare beneficiaries with benefits through the Railroad Retirement Board, and the RRB is responsible for creating and mailing those cards.
- (Judy Larry): OK, thank you.
- (Erin Pressley): You're welcome.
- Operator: Your next question comes in the line of (Jill Wickson) of Hospice of Marion County, your line is open.
- (Jill Wickson): Thank you. I had a question in regards to the HIC numbers coming back with the new MBI on the remittance advices from our MACs. If we submit our claims with the HIC number, will it come back with MBI?
- (Tricia Rodgers): Starting in October 2018, if you submit a valid and active HICN on a claim, the remit will have the MBI in the changed HICN field so you'll get the MBI - sorry, you'll get the HICN that you submitted returned as normal and then the MBI will be in a change HICN field.
- (Jill Wickson): OK, great. Thanks so much.
- (Tricia Rodgers): You're welcome.
- Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Diane Ortman) of Surgery Partners, your line is open.
- (Diane Ortman): I know that you mentioned that you have this flow basis by geographic location on your website so that everybody knows when to expect the cards.

Do you think you'd be able to put a blurb on there when those cards have in fact gone out? I think that would help people to know that...

(Lois Serio): We are trying to be careful. We have a balancing act between getting out enough information so that people are aware that things are coming. We also have to be careful about fraud, and we want to make sure that we share what's appropriate and needed.

(Erin Pressley): Yes, that's true and this is Erin. I'll just add to that and say that we do you have plans to have additional information available for beneficiaries on Medicare.gov once the mailings begin so that they can get up-to-date information about mailings and their state when they started, when they've completed, those types of things.

We're encouraging beneficiaries to sign up for emails and we have an email box on our Medicare.gov site now so that we can provide individual beneficiaries with more personalized or localized information about their mailings but we'll also have the more national level information about when cards are mailing to certain states and when they're completed.

(Diane Ortman): Great. Thanks.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Tonya Springs) of Carolina Pathology. Your line is open.

(Tonya Springs): Hi, my question is a (gift base) of the billing. If starting, let's say for example April 1st, we start using the MBI number, do you know whether -- because we use of (inaudible), do you know whether they are set up to handle the new numbers? Are we going to have to worry about claims rejected?

(Tricia Rodgers): Yes, we're encouraging all providers to contact their vendors to make sure that they're ready to process and transmit the new MBI. We've talked with a lot of different vendors and clearinghouses and they say that they're ready but we're also encouraging providers to reach out to their vendor partners and confirm act.

(Tonya Springs): OK. Thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Betty Medina), your line is open.

(Betty Medina): Yes, just to clarify, we will be able to bill with the HIC number until December 2019 right?

(Tricia Rodgers): That's correct. Through December 31st, 2019, you can submit HICNs on your claims.

(Betty Medina): OK. That's what I'm -- OK, and there's two points -- you talked about portals where the beneficiary can use or the provider can use their different portals, right? We can -- you're talking about our own portals that we use as vendors but when the beneficiary wants to find out their MBI number, then they go through the CMS.gov, right?

(Tricia Rodgers): No, so the beneficiaries use MyMedicare.gov and need to sign up for that portal and providers use their Medicare Administrative Contractor portals, their MAC's portals to look up the MBI. It's the same place that you do that you submit claims, that you check claim status and submit first-line appeals that type of things.

(Betty Medina): OK. Are we allowed to help them out with the portals like for example, we have a business office that we sometimes send patients when they have issues with their insurance, are we allowed to assist them by providing guidance on how to getting to the Internet and get that number?

(Tricia Rodgers): If the beneficiary is willing to give you information and you have the staff to be able to support that and resources to be able to help them that would be wonderful if you could.

(Betty Medina): OK. Thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Jeremy Beard). Your line is open.

(Jeremy Beard): Hi, we were wondering what health plans can expect to receive returned new Medicare ID cards that were mailed and will that be sent via (TR).

(Erinn Shockey): This is (Erinn Shockey), we're not going to include information about the card mailing on the daily transaction reply report.

(Jeremy Beard): So I'm assuming you're considering -- you're not going to consider them out of the area and send that notification on the (TR), correct?

(Erin Shockey): We're not changing other than putting the MBI in the field the HICN used to be in, we're not changing anything about the transaction reply report. So you'll get all the same transaction codes you get now with the exception we're adding the new TRC 350 to inform plans if they submit a HICN or if there's an MBI, but -- did that answer your question?

(Jeremy Beard): I'm still little fuzzy about, would you put them in the potential out of area process if you did receive a returned Medicare card through the mail?

(Erinn Shockey): The out of area process is not changing so if they are considered out of area, that wouldn't be directly related to whether or not their card was returned in the mail. No.

(Jeremy Beard): So we would not expect to receive those TRCs on returned Medicare card?

(Erinn Shockey): Not just because their Medicare card was returned in the mail, no. It'll work the same as it does now.

(Jeremy Beard): Do you know if HICN changes will still occur after (04/01)?

(Erinn Shockey): Yes, but we won't be informing plans of HICN changes after (04/01). In the rare case that an MBI changes we'll inform the plans of that using the same TRCs that we use now to let plans know when a HICN changes.

(Jeremy Beard): OK. And just a follow-up question, what's expected from health plans if a new member enrolls after (03/05) which was the initial crosswalk and if we receive a TR with the MBI updates not related to HICN. How are we supposed to handle those scenarios?

(Erinn Shockey): Well, you won't receive transaction reply report with MBIs until after (04/01). The first one will go out on 04/03/2018 so you would handle them the same way as you handle the ones with the HICNs based on the TRC, take whatever plan action is indicated. It's just going to have the MBI instead of the HICN.

(Lois Serio): Thank you. We have time for one more question.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Ken Barber). Please go ahead, your line is open.

(Ken Barber): Hello, this is related to HPMS memo from February 16th about appeals-related changes, particularly reconsideration- and redetermination-related notices (inaudible) and transmittal coversheets.

The guidance in that memo says to continue to use HICN or (masked) HICN rather on all these documents but is it -- are you reconsidering that or would you possibly reconsider that to allow a (masked) HICN instead or else the cardholder ID particular to coversheet for the cardholder ID?

(Shelley Winston): Hi, thank you for your question. This is (Shelley Winston) from Part D, we are aware that concern and I know that there will be some clarification coming. So just stay tuned for that.

Lois Serio: And we want to thank everyone for participating in today's call. Also if you still have questions, please send them to newMedicarecardSSNremoval@CMS.hhs.gov and we will try to respond as quickly as we can. Again thank you so much for your participation today and we look forward to speaking with you in the future. Have a good day.

Operator: This concludes today's conference call. Thank you for your participation and you may now disconnect.

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