

Open Door Forum Newsletter

August 2002

Volume 1, Issue 10

Hot Announcements !

Stats of the Month

762 teleconference lines were open to individual and group participants and 198 guests visited with the CMS Administrator and staff during the eleven Open Door Forums held during July.

Office of the Administrator

The Office of the Administrator hosted three open door meetings in New York City for health plans, hospitals, and long-term care providers. OA also hosted a special listening session for hospice providers. At that meeting, providers thanked CMS for the publication of the CMS letter (click here: <http://www.nhpc.org/public/articles/scully-2.pdf>) and articles (click here: <http://www.nhpc.org/public/articles/CMS042002.pdf>) clarifying Medicare coverage rules for the Medicare hospice benefit.



During the month of July, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) shared the following key announcements through the Open Door Forum Initiative:

- **Advance Beneficiary Notice:** On June 18, the Office of Management and Budget approved a new ABN and that a Program Memorandum announcing the new form would be going out on July 1. The new form, ABN FORM CMS-R-131, can be found here: <http://www.cms.gov/medlearn/refabn.asp>
- **Letters to State Surveyors:** Are now published once a month and can be found here: <http://cms.hhs.gov/medicaid/lcsp/lcsmemos.asp> The site is updated the second Thursday of every month and is designed to assist providers and beneficiaries.
- **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act:** A hotline to assist with the Administrative Simplification aspects of HIPAA can be reached by dialing (410) 786-4232. An upcoming roundtable teleconference, scheduled for August 22nd from 2 to 3:30 pm EST, can be attended by dialing (800) 837-1935 and the following ID number: 4716718. Also, a re-airing of a HIPAA video "Administrative Simplification of HIPAA," will take place on September 10th from 2 to 3:30 pm EST. For more information, please click here: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/hipaa/hipaa2/default.asp>



President's Commission on Mental Health

At the Disabilities Open Door Forum, we announced the formation and first meeting of the President's Commission on Mental Health. President Bush is establishing the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health. The Commission will be composed of fifteen members, appointed by the President, and seven ex-officio members from executive branch agencies. To read the Executive Order, please click here: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/04/print/20020429-2.html>

The Commission will identify the needs of patients, the barriers to care, and investigate community-based care models that have success in coordinating and providing mental health services. The Commission will have one year to recommend immediate improvements that can be implemented by all aspects of the public and private mental health system to improve coordination and quality of services with existing resources.

Information Disclaimer: The information provided in this newsletter is only intended to be general summary information to the public. It is not intended to take the place of either the written law or regulations.

Links to Other Resources: Our newsletter may link to other federal agencies and private organizations. You are subject to those sites' privacy policies. Reference in this newsletter to any specific commercial products, process, service, manufacturer, or company does not constitute its endorsement or recommendation by the U.S. Government, HHS or CMS. HHS or CMS is not responsible for the contents of any "off-site" resource referenced.



Open Door Forum Schedule

To see the most up-to-date ODF Schedule, please click here: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/opendoor/schedule.asp>



Physicians

The Physician Open Door Forum learned that the Physician Fee Schedule regulation for calendar year 2003 had been promulgated.

Of particular note was a change in the calculation of the Medicare Economic Index that ameliorated the effect of the decline in the payment update.

CMS also shared that we had issued an instruction to our contractors via a Program Memorandum on the LMRP appeals process.

To retrieve the most current information regarding CMS' Medicare coverage policy-making process, click here: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/coverage/>

Hospital

At the May Hospital Open Door Forum, we announced that the provision of Hospital Transmittal Number 9 affecting critical access hospital outpatient billing would be effective **prospectively** only and would **not** have a negative retroactive effect.

Nurses & Allied Health

We shared with the Nurses and Allied Health Professionals Open Door Forum that CMS had issued a June 7 Program Memorandum clarifying the payment rules for services provided by audiologists. In particular, we made clear that payment could be made by the program even if the patient's final diagnosis is need for a hearing aid. To view the PM, please click here: <http://www.hcfa.gov/pubforms/transmit/AB02080.pdf>

Disability

Based on input from a previous Disability ODF and by several interested parties, CMS has announced a new coding decision for roll-on gel liners, a prosthetic device used by amputees. The product of several months of hard work by CMS staff and interested parties, this decision clearly represents a favorable outcome for all involved. To locate and review this and other PMs in greater detail, click here: http://www.hcfa.gov/pubforms/transmit/memos/comm_date_dsc.htm

ESRD & Clinical Labs

At the ESRD open door meeting, we announced that we had worked with ESRD providers to develop a work-around to an error in our contractors' software that was inappropriately denying payment for dialysis services for patients who the system incorrectly told our contractors were inpatients. Some providers continue to have problems, but we are working them through with our contractors.

In addition, we announced that we would re-issue our PM on measuring hematocrit concentration during EPO therapy. To obtain a copy of the signed and issued PM, click here: <http://www.hcfa.gov/pubforms/transmit/AB02100.pdf>

For any information regarding the Open Door Forum Initiative, please feel free to contact Tom Barker, Special Assistant to the Administrator for Outreach, at (202) 690-0056 or tbarker@cms.hhs.gov



Health Plan

During this important forum, CMS explained how we would implement the provisions of the bioterrorism bill that President Bush had recently signed, which delayed the ACR filing deadline for M+C plans and pushed back the effective date of M+C lock-in for three years. For more information on how we would implement this change, click here: <http://www.cms.gov/healthplans/lockin/default.asp>

CMS also announced that we had published the Medicaid managed care regulation. For its resources, click here: <http://cms.hhs.gov/medicaid/managedcare/cms2104f.asp>

Home Health

At the Home Health Open Door Forum, we announced that the CMS Health Care Industry Market Update for Home Health had been completed and was available on our website. To view, click here: http://www.cms.gov/reports/hcimu/hcimu_06282002.pdf

CMS announced the repayment of Home Health PIP payments policy and said that we would be very generous in allowing extended time for repayments. For more information, click here: <http://www.hcfa.gov/pubforms/transmit/A02055.pdf>

We also announced that the Home Health PPS payment regulation for CY 2003 had been published in the Federal Register. For more information, click here: <http://cms.hhs.gov/providers/hhapps/default.asp>

Home health providers discovered that CMS would be hosting an **OASIS Town Hall Meeting** on July 31 at CMS headquarters in Baltimore, which was well attended with more than 500 guests in person and via teleconference.

We also announced that we had resolved the confusion over home health coverage for foot care for patients with diabetes. Through a transmittal (click here: <http://www.hcfa.gov/pubforms/transmit/ab02042.pdf>) to the home health manual, our contractors should be able to develop LMRP for foot care.