



Medicare Enrollment & Appeals Group

DATE: February 16, 2018

TO: All Medicare Advantage Organizations, Prescription Drug Plans, Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (“PACE”) Organizations, Medicare-Medicaid Plans, Section 1833 Health Care Prepayment Plans (HCPPs), and Section 1876 Cost Plans

FROM: Jerry Mulcahy
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SUBJECT: Appeals-Related Changes to Prepare for the New Medicare Card Project

The Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (MACRA) requires that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) remove Social Security Numbers (SSNs) from all Medicare cards by April 2019. A new Medicare Beneficiary Identifier (MBI) will replace the SSN-based Health Insurance Claim Number (HICN) on new Medicare cards which will be issued to beneficiaries starting in April 2018. Generally, CMS will allow for a transition period between April 1, 2018 and December 31, 2019, during which outside entities can submit either the beneficiary’s HICN or MBI.

Plans should use the guidelines below in order to determine what type of identifier to use on their reconsideration- and redetermination-related notices, background data forms, and their case file transmittal cover sheets.

- Until the transition period ends, plans should continue to use a truncated HICN or a plan identification (ID) number on their reconsideration and redetermination-related notices. When transmitting case files, plans should use continue to use a HICN on their cover sheets.
- After the transition period, a masked MBI or plan ID number should be placed on all outgoing correspondence, instead of a masked HICN. When transmitting case files, plans should use an MBI.

The rationale for this policy is to ensure that beneficiaries and providers recognize the identifier, but minimize the likelihood that plans serve as a translation service between the HICN and MBI.

Plans are encouraged to visit [CMS.gov/Medicare/New-Medicare-card/index.html](https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/New-Medicare-card/index.html) to learn about the New Medicare Card Project. Questions can be sent to NewMedicareCardSSNRemoval@cms.hhs.gov.