

MHDC NPI ADVISORY

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Subject: National Provider Identifiers (NPI)

WE HAVE MADE PROGRESS!

The May kickoff date for getting National Provider Identifiers (NPIs) is coming!

A group of hospitals, health plans, and state and federal government entities in Massachusetts have been working collaboratively to develop some options for enumerating (getting NPIs) for health care providers in the state. There is a growing consensus among the members of this group that this process can be streamlined and efficient. At this point, the following options may be possibilities:

Option 1 – **BULK ENUMERATION** – a provider delegates responsibility for enumeration to a third party

- State licensing agencies (e.g., Board of Registration in Medicine for physicians)
- Private vendors

Option 2 – **INDIVIDUAL ENUMERATION** – a provider gets an NPI directly

- CMS web site – provider can go on-line and apply for an NPI
- NPI Fairs – a large hospital or multi-provider organization holds an event at which providers can apply for an NPI

KEEP IN MIND: PROVIDERS SHOULD GIVE AUTHORIZATION TO ONLY ONE ENTITY TO APPLY FOR AN NPI.

COMPLIANCE DATES:

It is expected providers may begin applying for NPIs in **May 2005**. Large health plans must begin using the NPIs by **May 2007**. Small health plans must begin using the NPIs by **May 2008**. Some plans have expressed interest in starting to use the NPI earlier than May 2007. For example, CMS expects to be able to accept the NPI on Medicare bills in **October 2006**.

Though the NPI will not be mandated as the sole identifier to be used by most health plans in standard transactions until **May, 2007**, many changes are likely to be required within the systems of health plans' (including Medicare, Medicaid and Commercial Plans) and organizational providers that will necessitate that providers get their NPIs as early as possible.

STAY TUNED:

- More concrete information on the above stated options will be **coming your way within 30 days**.

WHAT YOU SHOULD BE DOING NOW:

- Communicate internally and externally with associates and providers to **deliver a consistent message**.
- **Decide** who will be applying for an NPI on the provider's behalf and obtain authorization.
- Providers should give **authorization to only one entity** to apply for an NPI on their behalf.
- **Continue to review** your process for capturing and maintaining provider data throughout your organization – from planning/marketing all the way through payment/EOB and Medical Records.
- Remember providers will be able to apply for an NPI at **no cost**

You can review the most recent NPI information on the CMS web site at

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/hipaa/hipaa2/regulations/identifiers/default.asp> or you can call your professional society.