

Dear PMC Members:

On Wednesday, December 20, 2006, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) hosted an Open Door Forum (ODF) on Home Health, Hospice and Durable Medical Equipment. Natalie Highsmith of CMS' Office of External Affairs moderated. The following are the topics discussed of relevance to PMD stakeholders.

### **PMD Fee Schedule:**

The PMC took the opportunity to thank CMS for their assistance in correcting problems with the implementation of the fee schedule in Region A where claims were being denied because of non-recognition of the new codes. The PMC gave CMS a “heads up” that suppliers in Region D are beginning to see claims process anomalies and CMS stated that they would look into the matter. The PMC also voiced concerns that the revisited revised fee schedule, released last week, still fails to reflect historic pricing and that some manufacturing data is still not included for some codes. The PMC stated its intent to again bring these concerns to the appropriate staff at CMS. CMS responded that they felt the pricing is accurate and, while willing to listen, they seemed to suggest that any further change in the fee schedule would be unlikely.

### **Accreditation:**

CMS has released the names of the eleven organizations that will serve as DMEPOS accreditation bodies. The names of those organizations, as well as their contact information and the specific products each is authorized to accredit are available at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicareprovidersupenroll> or [http://www.cms.hhs.gov/CompetitiveAcqforDMEPOS/downloads/DMEPOS\\_Accreditation\\_Organizations.pdf](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/CompetitiveAcqforDMEPOS/downloads/DMEPOS_Accreditation_Organizations.pdf).

CMS requested that suppliers with specific questions about accreditation contact the company they intend to be accredited by, not CMS. Moreover, there is no set date by which all DMEPOS suppliers must be accredited, but that date will be published as soon as it is known.

Another question asked whether multi-location suppliers need to get all of their branches accredited at once, or whether they will be able to accredit only those facilities taking part in the competitive bidding program. All suppliers who supply DME must be accredited at some point, even if they will not participate in competitive bidding. CMS strongly recommended that suppliers get accredited at once, even if it involves multiple locations; otherwise suppliers will have to compile much of the same corporate information multiple times. It was recommended that concerned parties contact the company from whom they will seek accreditation and discuss the process with them.

### **Competitive Bidding:**

When asked about the release of the final rule for competitive bidding, and to what extent suppliers could rely on the recently released regulatory calendar, CMS responded that these schedules are not 100% accurate, and it was too early to predict when the final rule would be released (although they did state that they hoped it would be earlier than the March date indicated on the regulatory calendar). Further questions on competitive bidding revealed that the initial ten MSAs subject to competitive bidding would be released with the final rule. Moreover, information on how suppliers will deal with multiple locations and franchises in the competitive bidding procedure will be addressed at some point in the future.

CMS' next ODF for Home health, Hospice and DME is scheduled for Tuesday, January 30, 2007. As always, the PMC will provide you details on how to participate in the meeting when they become available.