DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

News Flash – Existing regulations at 42 CFR 424.510(e)(1)(2) require that at the time of enrollment, enrollment change request, or revalidation, providers and suppliers that expect to receive payment from Medicare for services provided must also agree to receive Medicare payments through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Section 1104 of the Affordable Care Act further expands Section 1862(a) of the Social Security Act by mandating federal payments to providers and suppliers only by electronic means. As part of CMS's revalidation efforts, all suppliers and providers who are not currently receiving EFT payments are required to submit the CMS-588 EFT form with the Provider Enrollment Revalidation application, or at the time any change is being made to the provider enrollment record by the provider or supplier, or delegated official. For more information about provider enrollment revalidation, review the **MLN Matters® Special Edition Article SE1126,** "Further Details on the Revalidation of Provider Enrollment Information."

MLN Matters® Number: SE1216 Revised   **Related Change Request (CR) #: N/A**

Related CR Release Date: N/A   **Effective Date: N/A**

Related CR Transmittal #: N/A   **Implementation Date: N/A**

Examining the Difference between a National Provider Identifier (NPI) and a Provider Transaction Access Number (PTAN)

Note: This article was revised on September 5, 2014, to add the "Where Can I Find My PTAN?" section on page 3. All other information is the same.

Provider Types Affected

This MLN Matters® Special Edition Article is intended for physicians, providers, and suppliers who are enrolled in Medicare.

What You Need to Know

This article explains the difference between a National Provider Identifier (NPI) and a Provider Transaction Access Number (PTAN). There are no policy changes in this article.

Background

New Enrollees

All providers and suppliers who provide services and bill Medicare for services provided to Medicare beneficiaries must have an NPI. Upon application to a Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC), the provider or supplier will also be issued a Provider Transaction Access Number (PTAN). While only the NPI can be submitted on claims, the PTAN is a critical number directly linked to the provider or supplier's NPI.

Revalidation

Section 6401(a) of the Affordable Care Act established a requirement for all enrolled physicians, providers, and suppliers to revalidate their enrollment information under new enrollment screening criteria.

Providers and suppliers receiving requests to revalidate their enrollment information have asked the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to clarify the differences between the NPI and the PTAN.

National Provider Identifier (NPI)

The NPI is a **national** standard under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Administrative Simplification provisions.

- The NPI is a unique identification number for covered health care providers.

- The NPI is issued by the National Plan and Provider Enumeration System (NPPES).

- Covered health care providers and all health plans and health care clearinghouses must use the NPI in the administrative and financial transactions (for example, insurance claims) adopted under HIPAA.

- The NPI is a 10-position, intelligence-free numeric identifier (10-digit number). The NPI does not carry information about healthcare providers, such as the state in which they live or their medical specialty. This reduces the chances of insurance fraud.

- Covered providers and suppliers must share their NPI with other suppliers and providers, health plans, clearinghouses, and any entity that may need it for billing purposes.

Since May 23, 2008, Medicare has required that the NPI be used in place of all legacy provider identifiers, including the Unique Physician Identification Number (UPIN), as the unique identifier for all providers, and suppliers in HIPAA standard transactions.

You should note that individual health care providers (including physicians who are sole proprietors) may obtain only one NPI for themselves (Entity Type 1 Individual). Incorporated individuals should obtain one NPI for themselves (Entity Type 1 Individual) if they are health care providers and an additional NPI(s) for their corporation(s) (Entity Type 2 Organization). Organizations that render health care or furnish health care supplies may obtain NPIs (Entity Type 2 Organization) for their organizations and their subparts (if applicable).

For more information about the NPI, visit the NPPES website at **https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov/NPPES/Welcome.do** on the CMS website.

Provider Transaction Access Number (PTAN)

A PTAN is a Medicare-only number issued to providers by MACs upon enrollment to Medicare. When a MAC approves enrollment and issues an approval letter, the letter will contain the PTAN assigned to the provider.

- The approval letter will note that the NPI must be used to bill the Medicare program and that the PTAN will be used to authenticate the provider when using MAC self-help tools such as the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) phone system, internet portal, on-line application status, etc.

- The PTAN's use should generally be limited to the provider's contacts with their MAC.

Where can I find my PTAN?

You can find your PTAN by doing any one of the following:

1. View the letter sent by your MAC when your enrollment in Medicare was approved.
2. Log into **Internet-based PECOS**. Click on the "My Enrollments" button and then "View Enrollments". Locate the applicable enrollment and click on the "View Medicare ID Report" link which will list all of the provider or supplier's active PTANs in one report.
3. The provider (or, in the case of an organizational provider, an authorized or delegated official) shall send a signed written request on company letterhead to your **MAC**; include your legal name/legal business name, national provider identifier (NPI), telephone and fax numbers.

Relationship of the NPI to the PTAN

The NPI and the PTAN are related to each other for Medicare purposes. A provider must have one NPI and will have one, or more, PTAN(s) related to it in the Medicare system, representing the provider's enrollment. If the provider has relationships with one or more medical groups or practices or with multiple Medicare contractors, separate PTANS are generally assigned.

Together, the NPI and PTAN identify the provider, or supplier in the Medicare program. CMS maintains both the NPI and PTAN in the Provider Enrollment Chain & Ownership System (PECOS), the master provider and supplier enrollment system.

Protect Your Information in PECOS

All providers and suppliers should carefully review their PECOS records in order to protect themselves and their practices from identity theft. PECOS should only contain active enrollment records that reflect current practice and group affiliations. You can review and update your PECOS records in the following ways:

- Use internet-based PECOS: Log on to internet-based PECOS at **https://pecos.cms.hhs.gov/pecos/login.do** on the CMS website.

- Use the Paper CMS 855 enrollment application (i.e., 855A, 855B, 855I, 855O, 855R, or 855S).

- Note: The Medicare contractor may not release provider specific information to anyone other than the individual provider, authorized/delegated official of the provider organization, or the contact person. The request must be submitted in writing on the provider's letterhead and signed by the individual provider, authorized/delegated official of the organization or the contact person.

The MLN fact sheet titled "How to Protect Your Identity Using the Provider Enrollment, Chain and Ownership System (PECOS)," provides guidelines and steps you can take to protect your identity while using Internet-based PECOS. This fact sheet is available at **http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/downloads/MedEnroll_ProtID_FactSheet_ICN905103.pdf** on the CMS website.

Additional Information

MLN Matters® Special Edition Article SE1126 titled "Further Details on the Revalidation of Provider Enrollment Information," is available at **http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/SE1126.pdf** on the CMS website.

"Medicare Provider–Supplier Enrollment National Educational Products," contains a list of products designed to educate Medicare Fee-For-Service (FFS) providers about important Medicare enrollment information, including how to use Internet-based PECOS to enroll in

the Medicare Program and maintain their enrollment information. This resource is available at **http://www.cms.gov/MedicareProviderSupEnroll/downloads/Medicare_Provider-Supplier_Enrollment_National_Education_Products.pdf** on the CMS website.

If you have any questions, please contact your MAC at their toll-free number. That number is available at **http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/index.html** under - How Does It Work.