



BENEFIT NEWS BRIEFS

CMS Posts Guidance On Obtaining SSNs and HICNs for RREs for Section 111 Reporting

CMS Also Updates Section 111 Reporting Guide

Some group health plan (GHP) responsible reporting entities (RREs) have advised CMS that they are having difficulties in obtaining either the Health Insurance Claim Number (HICN) or SSN from some of their insured. An HICN is the number assigned by the Social Security Administration to an individual that identifies that individual as a Medicare beneficiary. In response, CMS has issued an *Alert* and provided a form with model questions (and with a picture of a Medicare card), to assist RREs in obtaining this information and being compliant with Section 111 reporting.

According to CMS, subscribers and dependents should routinely cooperate in furnishing either their HICN (or SSN if they do not have a HICN available) as requested by their GHP RRE. If an individual refuses to furnish a HICN or SSN, and the GHP RRE chooses to use the attached model language, CMS will consider the RRE compliant for purposes of its next Section 111 file submission if:

- A signed copy of the model language in the format provided is obtained (even if the individual is later discovered to be a Medicare beneficiary).
- With respect to that same individual, the RRE has the model language (with the picture of the Medicare ID card) re-signed and dated at least once every 12 months.
- The RRE retains this documentation.

However, CMS noted that this process does not provide a "safe harbor" to any RRE attempting to use it to avoid reporting Medicare Secondary Payer (MSP) data about an individual known to the RRE to be a Medicare beneficiary.

A copy of the *Alert* is available at the Section 111 website at:

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MandatoryInsRep/Downloads/ALERTGuidance%20ForHICNsSSns.pdf> or by "[clicking here.](#)"

A copy of the questionnaire is available at the Section 111 website at:

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MandatoryInsRep/Downloads/HICNSSNBENEFORM.pdf> or by "[clicking here.](#)"

Updated Reporting Guide

CMS has also updated the Section 111 GHP Reporting Guide and the new Version 2.3 is available by "[clicking here](#)" or available for download at the CMS website at: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MandatoryInsRep/Downloads/GHPUserGuideV2.3.pdf>.

A list of changes from Version 2.2 is found on pages 6 and 7 of the updated Guide.

See [Special Bulletin 2009-18](#) and Research Department issues mentioned therein for background information on Section 111 reporting.

Remaining Timeline

As a reminder, the remaining timeline for Section 111 reporting is:

GHP Implementation Timeline	
04/01/09 - 07/01/09	Testing period for new GHP RREs (those that did not have a prior VDSA/VDEA).
07/01/09 - 10/01/09	New GHP RREs submit their first Section 111 production files based upon a predetermined schedule with the COBC.
10/01/09	All GHP RREs will be submitting Section 111 production files by this date.

Future GHP Section 111 Teleconferences

In an effort to avoid the past problems of wrong phone numbers for teleconferences, CMS posted pertinent information for the remaining teleconference dates on its website. Future teleconference dates will be July 8, 2009; August 12, 2009 and September 15, 2009. All teleconferences will be held from 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM Eastern Time). The toll free phone number for all calls is (800) 779- 4354. The Passcode for all calls is SECTION 111. This information is also available at: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MandatoryInsRep/Downloads/GHPTeleconferencesDocument.pdf>

Keeping Current

Keep watching the "*MMSEA What's New*" portion at the Section 111 homepage at: http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MandatoryInsRep/04_Whats_New.asp#TopOfPage and also the GHP webpage for specific information for GHPs. The GHP page is at: http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MandatoryInsRep/02_GHP.asp#TopOfPage

* * *

LEGAL DISCLAIMER: Information contained in this publication is not legal advice, and should not be construed as legal advice. If you need legal advice upon which you can rely, you should seek a legal opinion from your attorney.