

## ABOUT MEDICARE PARTICIPATION

To sign a Medicare participation agreement is to agree to accept assignment for all covered services that you provide to Medicare patients.

### WHY PARTICIPATE?

If you bill for physicians' professional services, services and supplies (such as drugs and biologicals) provided incident to physicians' professional services, outpatient physical and occupational therapy services, diagnostic tests, and radiology services, your Medicare fee schedule amounts are not reduced by 5 percent as they are for nonparticipating physicians.

Also, regardless of the Medicare Part B services for which you are billing, participants have "one stop" billing for beneficiaries who have nonemployment-related Medigap coverage and who assign both their Medicare and Medigap payments to participants. After we have made payment, we automatically send the claim on to the Medigap insurer for payment of all coinsurance and deductible amounts due under the Medigap policy. The Medigap insurer must pay the participant directly.

The number of physicians, practitioners and suppliers who choose to participate in Medicare continues to grow. During CY 2001, 88.7 percent of all physicians, practitioners and suppliers are billing under signed Medicare participation agreements - this was a 0.4 percent increase over the number of CY 2000 participants.

### WHAT TO DO

If you choose to be a participant:

- Do nothing if you are currently participating, or
- If you are not currently a Medicare participant, complete the blank agreement enclosed and mail it (or a copy) to each carrier to which you submit Part B claims. (On the form show the name(s) and identification number(s) under which you bill.)

When can the decision to participate be made:

- Toward the end of each calendar year (generally in November), all Medicare carriers have an open enrollment period. During this period, providers who are currently enrolled in the Medicare Program can change their current participation status for the next calendar year. This is the only time these providers are given the opportunity to change their participation status. **These providers should contact their local Medicare carrier to learn where to send the agreement.**
- **New physicians, practitioners and suppliers can sign the participation agreement and become a Medicare participant at the time of their enrollment into the Medicare Program or they can wait and sign the participation agreement during the open enrollment period (contact carrier to get exact dates) as mentioned above.**

If you decide not to participate:

- Do nothing if you are currently not participating, or
- If you are currently a participant, write to each carrier to which you submit claims, advising of your termination effective the first day of the next calendar year. This written notice must be postmarked prior to the end of the current calendar year.

We hope you will decide to be a Medicare participant.

Please call the Medicare carrier in your jurisdiction (**[link to carriers](#)**) if you have any questions or need further information on participation.