
Program Memorandum Intermediaries/Carriers

Department of Health and
Human Services (DHHS)
HEALTH CARE FINANCING
ADMINISTRATION (HCFA)

Transmittal AB-01-75

Date: MAY 7, 2001

CHANGE REQUEST 1168

SUBJECT: Common Working File (CWF) Access Change

This Program Memorandum (PM) notifies the intermediaries and carriers of a change to the CWF to allow Managed Care Organization's (MCO) access to Medicare utilization data. There are no standard system changes required by the intermediaries and carriers.

Background:

Currently Medicare MCOs can obtain access to the CWF to view eligibility data for any beneficiary. This access is required:

- To determine if an individual is entitled to Medicare; and
- To determine a member's working aged status.

In addition to Medicare entitlement data and working aged periods, MCOs can access data on hospice periods, medicaid status, and ESRD status.

System Changes:

MCOs are responsible for ensuring that provided services do not exceed Medicare fee-for-service limits if the MCO does not offer a member additional benefits. This system change will allow MCOs to view utilization data in the CWF. They will not have access to an individual's claims data. This change will result in MCOs providing only allowable services to their members.

NOTE: MCOs cannot view utilization data unless the beneficiary is enrolled in their plan.

After the system implementation, in October 2001, MCOs will be able to access the following data for their members:

- Blood deductible pints remaining;
- Hospital days remaining;
- Co-insurance hospital days remaining;
- Skilled nursing facility (SNF) days remaining;
- Co-insurance SNF days remaining;
- Lifetime reserve days remaining;
- Lifetime psychiatric days remaining;
- Home health agency visits;
- Earliest billing date; and
- Latest billing date.

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Conclusion:

Again, there is no impact to the intermediaries and carriers. MCOs will continue to access the CWF as they do currently. The system changes will be made to the CWF, and training will be provided to the MCOs by HCFA staff.

Additional instructions will be issued to the MCOs regarding this change.

The *effective date* for this PM is October 1, 2001.

The *implementation date* for this PM is October 1, 2001.

These instructions should be implemented within your current operating budget.

This PM may be discarded after December 31, 2002.

If you have any questions, contact Kim Miegel on (410) 786-3311 or James Dorsey on (410) 786-1143.