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The Healthcare Bulletin

Medicare 2006 Premiums, Deductibles and Coinsurance

Part B monthly premium	\$88.50
Part B annual deductible	\$124.00
Part A SNF coinsurance	\$119.00

National Provider Identifier (NPI) Reminder

CMS will implement the National Provider Identifier (NPI), a single provider identifier, replacing the different provider identifiers you currently use for each health plan with which you do business beginning May 2007. A "Dear Provider letter" that will help you to understand the background of this requirement and what steps you need to take to apply for and receive an NPI can be accessed at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/hipaa/hipaa2/npi-provider.pdf>.

Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage

The Medicare prescription drug coverage, Medicare Part D, is scheduled to be in effect on January 1, 2006. The following CMS website provides important information about this new benefit. <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicarereform/pdbma/>

Expedited Determination Process for Medicare Part B

The August 19, 2005 Questions and Answers for the new Medicare expedited review process clarifies when expedited notice is and is not required in a SNF when payment is made by Part B. The CMS Questions and Answers (Q&As) may be accessed at [Questions and Answers Related To The New Process](#). These Q & As replace all previous guidance on the expedited review process.

CMS SNF/Long Term Care Open Door Forum

The next SNF/Long Term Care Open Door Forum is scheduled for October 27, 2005 at 2:00 PM (EDT). To participate, dial 1-800-837-1935 and reference Conference ID 2865539.

MDS Section W - Supplemental Items

The August RAI update includes instructions for completion of the new Section W regarding Influenza and Pneumococcal immunizations. The instructions include examples and an algorithm. Section W is included on all assessments with an assessment reference date on or after October 1, 2005.

Use of Grace Days

Grace days can be added to the Assessment Reference Date (ARD) in situations such as an absence/illness of the RN assessor, reassignment of the assessor to other duties for a short period of time, or an unusually large number of assessments due at approximately the same time. Grace days may also be used to more fully capture therapy minutes or other treatments. The use of grace days allows clinical flexibility in setting ARDs and should be used sparingly. If a facility chooses to routinely use grace days, it may be subject to review through the survey process or the fiscal intermediary. (Source: RAI Manual, Page 2-28.)

Restorative Nursing Manual

Nursing Rehabilitation Restorative Care Manual is a practical approach to setting up a restorative nursing program that meets the requirements outlined in the MDS 2.0 User's Manual. This manual can assist providers in providing restorative nursing care and optimizing Medicare reimbursement and Medicaid payment. Price: \$99. Orders can be placed by calling Ed Roberts at 1-800-277-0080 or ordering from the website at www.mjcpa.com.

Satellite Broadcast and Webcast on Nursing Home Immunization

Providers who missed the September 8, 2005, CMS live webcast/broadcast can still view it at: <http://cms.internetstreaming.com> for the next 12 months. Handouts from the broadcast are available.

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