

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland 21244-1850



CENTER FOR BENEFICIARY CHOICES

TO: Medicare Part D Sponsors

FROM: Cynthia G. Tudor, Ph.D., Acting Director, Medicare Drug Benefit Group

DATE: May 26, 2006

RE: Resolution of Medicare Beneficiary Urgent Complaints--UPDATE

I am writing to again remind Part D sponsors of their obligation to resolve complaints their plan enrollees have about the operation of their benefit plan. As you know, CMS established the 1-800-MEDICARE call center to respond to general beneficiary questions about the Part D program. However, the call center is not intended to respond to complaints or questions enrollees have about their particular Part D plan. Once a beneficiary has enrolled in a Part D plan, the plan sponsor becomes the beneficiary's primary resource for resolving issues related to the benefit plan. It is also the responsibility of the plan to contact all beneficiaries after issues have been resolved in order to notify the beneficiary of the resolution.

CMS has been receiving a large number of urgent requests from beneficiaries who are enrolled in a Part D plan. These urgent requests generally mean that the beneficiary is in immediate need of a medication refill. Because of the number of these urgent requests that CMS has been receiving, we are asking that your plan work immediately toward reducing the overall number of cases that have been referred to you. We especially ask that you identify and resolve all urgent cases immediately but no later than 2 business days. Urgent cases are identified in the HPMS CTM are those cases which have an Issue Level that is equal to "Immediate Need/Life Threatening."

As a reminder, we would again request you include reminders in any newsletters, general health promotion materials, or customer service correspondence routine that beneficiaries should first contact their plan sponsor with any questions or concerns they have about their Part D benefit plan.

For your assistance, we have again enclosed the email addresses for CMS Regional Office caseworkers. Your organization must work directly with CMS Regional Office caseworkers to resolve issues on behalf of your enrollees. For this assistance, please contact your Regional Office caseworkers through the following e-mail addresses:

Region 1 - CMS PartDComplaints_RO1@cms.hhs.gov
Region 2 - CMS PartDComplaints_RO2@cms.hhs.gov
Region 3 - CMS PartDComplaints_RO3@cms.hhs.gov

Region 4 - CMS PartDComplaints_RO4@cms.hhs.gov
Region 5 - CMS PartDComplaints_RO5@cms.hhs.gov
Region 6 - CMS PartDComplaints_RO6@cms.hhs.gov
Region 7 - CMS PartDComplaints_RO7@cms.hhs.gov
Region 8 - CMS PartDComplaints_RO8@cms.hhs.gov
Region 9 - CMS PartDComplaints_RO9@cms.hhs.gov
Region 10 - CMS PartDComplaints_RO10@cms.hhs.gov

For all such communication, please use the subject line, “Plan Referral: [Plan Name].”
The regional offices will check the mailbox and communicate back to your organization so that you may call the beneficiary back to resolve the case.

Your cooperation in this matter will help ensure that CMS and Part D sponsor resources are used most effectively to respond to beneficiary questions and complaints about the Part D program. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and if you have any questions, please contact your CMS Account Manager.