STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

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MMCD All-Plan Letter 01-005

TO:

- ☒ Geographic Managed Care (GMC) Plans
- ☒ Prepaid Health Plans (PHP)
- ☒ Primary Care Case Management (PCCM) Plans
- ☒ Two-Plan Model Plans
- ☒ CalOptima

SUBJECT: IMPLEMENTATION OF A NEW PROCESS WHICH WILL REJECT ENCOUNTER DATA AT THE RECORD LEVEL

PURPOSE

The purpose of this All-Plan letter is to inform Medi-Cal managed care plans (MCPs) that Electronic Data Systems (EDS) will implement a new process on December 2, 2001, that will reject encounter data at the record level instead of at the file level. This is a change that MCPs, EDS and the California Department of Health Services (Department) developed collaboratively to improve the quality of the encounter data residing in the Department's data system. It applies only to MCPs that submit data in the proprietary encounter data format (not to MCPs using the 35-File format).

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

MCPs currently provide encounter data to EDS' Encounter Data Unit (EDU) under one of the following methods:

- Medi-Cal Extranet for State Healthcare (MESH);
- Diskettes;
- Compact Discs (CD);
- ZIP Disks; or
- Tape cartridges.

Regardless of the method of submission, all encounter data files contain a volser number added either electronically or manually. A volser number is a unique number used by EDS to identify individual submissions. Once an MCP's file is uploaded into the mainframe, each record, for all record types, is edited for "Critical," "1%," and "5%" errors. If a file fails any of the edit thresholds, the system rejects the entire file (submission). The

change to rejection of encounter data at the "record level" means that there will no longer be 1% and 5% error thresholds; all errors will be treated as critical errors (though not all errors will cause a record to be rejected). A report listing the individual records that fail one or more edits will be sent electronically to the MCPs for correction and resubmission to EDS. Those individual records that pass all the edits will be sent to the mainframe. All edits are based on the data field specifications contained in the current Data Element Dictionary.

The report of failed records is the MR-O-192 report and will include all essential details associated with the rejection of each affected record. EDS will utilize the Medi-Cal MESH to transmit the MR-O-192 reports directly to MCPs. The MESH will be used until this process migrates to the Medi-Cal Web Site beginning February, 2002. The MCPs and EDS will then use the Medi-Cal Web Site for encounter data uploads and all related encounter data transactions. EDS will have the capability to copy the reports to a CD or diskette if necessary.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What happens to the rejected record if the MCP does not correct it and resubmit it to EDS?

Answer: EDS will not follow up with the MCP to request resubmission of the rejected record. Submission of valid encounter data is a term of MCP contracts. Failure to resubmit will be handled as a contract compliance issue.

2. What if a MCP resubmits a record more than once?

Answer: An edit process is in place that will detect and not accept duplicate records.

3. How long will encounter data reports be available for the MCPs to retrieve?

Answer: Beginning February 2002, the reports will reside on the Medi-Cal Web Site for 3 business days to enable MCPs to download the MR-O-192 report.

4. What are the advantages of converting to record level rejection?

Answer: It is more efficient if records that pass all the edits are sent directly to the Department's data warehouse instead of being rejected with the entire file. Also, there have been instances where files that have some bad data, but not enough to exceed the thresholds, were passed on to the data warehouse, thereby compromising the accuracy of the data in the warehouse. Finally, record level rejection will make it easier for MCPs to correct a smaller file, consisting entirely of rejected records, rather than having to sort through a larger file containing both rejected and acceptable records.

5. What if a MCP wants to continue with the 1% and 5% edits and not have its encounter data subject to record level rejection?

Answer: This is not an option. All encounter data will be subject to record level rejection.

6. If a MCP submits its encounter data on diskette or CD instead of electronically, how will the MCP know which records were rejected?

Answer: EDS will generate the MR-O-192 report on diskette or CD and will mail it to the MCP.

7. Will MCPs receive training?

Answer: No. However, EDS will provide technical support to the MCPs via telephone and e-mail.

8. Who should MCPs contact when they have questions about the rejected record report (MR-O-192)?

Answer: MCPs are to contact their EDS Encounter Data Unit analyst.

If you have any questions about the process of transitioning to record-level rejection for encounter data submissions, please contact Richard Epstein at (916) 657-1217.

Sincerely,

Cheri Rice

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