STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

GRAY DAVIS, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
714/744 P Street
P.O. Box 942732
Sacramento, CA 94234-7320
(916) 657-0258

November 6, 2000

TO: All County Welfare Directors
All County Administration Officers
All County Medi-Cal Program Specialists/Liaisons
QMB/SLMB/QI Coordinators
All County Mental Health Directors
All County Public Health Directors

Letter No.: 00-55

MEDICARE SAVINGS PROGRAMS-HEALTH CARE FINANCING ADMINISTRATION'S (HCFA) NEW NAME FOR THE QUALIFIED MEDICARE BENEFICIARY, SPECIFIED LOW INCOME MEDICARE BENEFICIARY, AND QUALIFYING INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMS (QMB, SLMB, QI)

The purpose of this letter is to inform the counties of HCFA's use of the term "Medicare Savings programs" when referring to the QMB, SLMB, QDWI, and QI programs. HCFA has found an inconsistency in how they, other Federal Agencies, and the states refer to these dual eligible programs. This inconsistency causes confusion and frustration for beneficiaries when contacting public agencies for information on the dual eligible programs. In addition, the formal names for the QMB, SLMB, QDWI, and QI programs are not beneficiary-friendly.

To help with this problem, HCFA will consistently refer to the dual eligible programs as "Medicare Savings programs" in its beneficiary oriented materials. This name was selected based on the results of focus group testing. Numerous names were tested with diverse groups of beneficiaries. Please note that this is not a new name by statute, but rather the name HCFA and possibly the Social Security Administration will be using. Please pass this information along to your county staff so that public inquiries regarding the Medicare Savings programs are recognized as dual eligible inquiries.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please telephone Ms. Vicki Partington of my staff at (916) 654-5909 or E-Mail her at Vparting@dhs.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

Glenda Arellano, Acting Chief
Medi-Cal Eligibility Branch