

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

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December 8, 1995

Medi-Cal Eligibility Branch Information Letter No.: I-95-30

TO: All County Welfare Directors
All County Administrative Officers
All County Medi-Cal Program Specialists/Liaisons

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION EXPANSION OF AUTOMATED TELEPHONE SERVICES TO INCLUDE MEDICARE ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Social Security Administration (SSA) is planning to expand the automated services offered on their National 800 number (1-800-772-1213). This expansion involves the addition of a series of prompts, one of which will be for Medicare contractor information.

Currently, callers who want information on how to contact Durable Medical Equipment Regional Carriers, Intermediaries, or Carriers must speak with a teleservice representative (TSR) to receive the appropriate telephone number and address.

The expansion of services will allow callers to get the address and telephone number information they seek via the automated service. Callers still have the option of remaining on the line to speak with a TSR. SSA expects that the automated service will provide quicker service for callers who want Medicare contractor information.

The automated services will NOT include HMO/Managed Care providers. Callers may get that information through personal contact with a TSR if they remain on the line.

SSA currently uses a network telephone prompt in 11 states. One selection from the prompt offers an interactive announcement service known as "Infoworx", an automated system that delivers pertinent information based on the zip code input by the caller. This automated system which has been piloted in these 11 states will be expanded to the entire nation through three gradual phases.

SSA anticipates expanding services to include Medicare prompts in the State of Virginia on November 16, 1995. The rest of the 11 states currently using a prompt are scheduled to offer expanded service on November 27, 1995. These states are: Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, and Oregon. **SSA ANTICIPATES PROVIDING THIS SERVICE TO THE REST OF THE NATION (i.e., REGION IX) ON DECEMBER 15, 1995.**

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There is a chance that you may notice some impact on your beneficiary inquiry workload resulting from this automation. To monitor the impact of this expansion, please contact Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) Regional Office (RO) if you notice that you are receiving a high-than-usual number of appropriate beneficiary telephone calls (i.e., possibly SSA was answering more of the noncontractor-specific inquiries prior to the automation). Also, contact HCFA RO if you notice an increase in calls that should not be coming to their respective offices (i.e., possibly the prompts may need to get rephrased to clear up beneficiary confusion over which type of contractor they need to contact). Telephone numbers of contractors were updated by SSA through HCFA regional offices. Therefore, the numbers should be current. Telephone numbers will be updated yearly, as necessary.

If you have noticed any impact on your beneficiary inquiry workload, please contact Ron Ho in the Division of Medicare, Customer Relations Branch, preferably via E-Mail using PROFS ID HCFASFO (GIB8) or RHO. He can be reached also by voicemail at (415) 744-3653 or FAX (415) 744-3761.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Frank S. Martucci, Chief
Medi-Cal Eligibility Branch