



DAVID MAXWELL-JOLLY
Director

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
Department of Health Care Services



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
Governor

September 3, 2009

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS Letter No.: 09-49
ALL COUNTY WELFARE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS
ALL COUNTY MEDI-CAL PROGRAM SPECIALISTS/LIAISONS
ALL COUNTY MEDS LIAISONS

SUBJECT: SURVEY QUESTIONS ON MEDS TRANSACTIONS (COUNTY INPUT
NEEDED FOR ENHANCED FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENT)

The purpose of this letter is to request Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS) information needed for discussions with the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) regarding federal reimbursement to the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS).

Since 1984, DHCS has been approved by CMS to claim an additional 25 percent federal funding for the time that county staff enter MEDS updates and card generation transactions. The computation has three variables – the number of qualified transactions in each county each quarter, the average hourly clerical salary in that county, and an average time of 1:56 minutes per transaction based on a time study in 1984.

Last year the federal auditor insisted that DHCS update this time study by having the county workers capture this time entering these MEDS transactions. There has been discussion with CMS as to whether the time spent researching what needs to be entered onto the screens should be included, or just the time it takes to key enter the data. The recommendation of the federal auditor is that since counties don't have a uniform process for entering MEDS transactions – in some counties the staff who enter the online transactions, also do the research; and in some counties they don't – the time per transaction should be a blended statewide average.

Before we have further discussions with CMS on this issue, it would be helpful to understand whether there are any county concerns regarding modifying the time study for this purpose as well as if there are other potential solutions that we might suggest to CMS. Please note that this request has already been sent to county MEDS coordinators via a separate e-mail, so counties should coordinate their responses accordingly. We would greatly appreciate receiving your responses to the following questions by August 30, 2009.

In your county:

1. Would it be burdensome for the county to enter additional information on the county time study to capture the time spent entering online MEDS transactions?
2. Are there any factors associated with the way counties do time studies that might make the time captured performing MEDS online transactions inaccurate? For example; are the staff who enter the majority of the MEDS transactions, not the same persons who track their time in the time studies in your county?
3. Is there a unit which is responsible for inputting all or most of the MEDS transactions?
4. Are the persons who enter the MEDS transactions, the same individuals who perform the research including file clearance to determine what data to put in the various fields? Or, do some staff perform the research and other staff do the key entering?
5. Has your county performed any internal time studies for union purposes or other reasons where you tracked the time associated with entering online MEDS transactions?
6. In your county, does a staff person actually key in the MEDS update and card generation transactions, or are those MEDS transactions created by the consortium batch process; or, is it a combination of the two?

All County Welfare Directors Letter No.: 09-49
Page 3
September 3, 2009

Please direct your responses via email or any questions about this request to Mr. Rocky Evans at rocky.evans@dhcs.ca.gov, or (916) 552-8569. Responses must include county contact information in the event a response needs further clarification. Thank you for your attention to this request.

Vivian Auble, Chief
Medi-Cal Eligibility Division