

## **CMS Considers Improvements Based on Plan Feedback: Spring Conference**

CMS is considering feedback received from plans, such as updating manual chapters more frequently, improving beneficiary plan selection process, developing more beneficiary friendly materials and streamlining the Appeals, Audit and Star Rating processes, the agency announced at the 2017 MA & PDP Spring Conference May 10.

Topics covered at the annual conference included Auto-Forwarding Coverage Determinations to the Independent Review Entity (IRE), Summary of Benefits, Section 504, CAHPS Measures, Provider Directory Review, Care Coordination and the Social Security Initiative.

Highlights from the conference include:

- CMS noted the fact that Section 504 and Section 508 overlap. Section 504 ensures that people with disabilities have equal access to programs, services, activities and facilities that receive Federal financial assistance, regardless of technology, and Section 508 ensures those with disabilities have accessibility through electronic technology.
- CMS provided an overview on Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS), in which the agency emphasized that CAHPS measures patient experience and not the satisfaction of the patient.
- The Social Security Initiative was discussed, and CMS provided details on the Medicare Billing Identifier (MBI) number and specifics on the member ID card. CMS also announced that once the transition period is over, members will still be able to use Health Insurance Claim Number (HICN) in appeals and adjustments situations.
- CMS is imposing Civil Money Penalties (CMPs) on plan sponsors with high IRE auto-forward rates. They expect plan sponsors to dedicate resources and establish processes to ensure timeliness.

BluePeak has been conducting mock Appeals Timeliness Monitoring reviews and providing support during actual Appeals Timeliness Monitoring reviews since CMS began this effort in January. CMS indicates the reviews, which are focused on IRE auto-forwards, will be staggered throughout the year. If your Organization/Coverage Determinations and Appeals data has yet to be reviewed by CMS, let BluePeak help you and your team prepare.

**Contact BluePeak at (469) 319-1228 or [info@bluepeak.com](mailto:info@bluepeak.com) for a free consultation.**

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