

Qualified Independent Contractors (QIC) Fact Sheet

What are Qualified Independent Contractors (QICs)?

The Medicare, Medicaid, and SCHIP Benefits Improvement and Protection Act (BIPA) of 2000 included provisions aimed at improving the Medicare appeals process. Part of these provisions mandate that all second-level appeals, also known as reconsiderations, be conducted by Qualified Independent Contractors (QICs). These provisions require those QICs utilize a comprehensive data system to collect and share information about appeals decisions, give weight to carrier and fiscal intermediary local coverage determinations, and conduct a panel review of all medical necessity denials.

In 2003, the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act (MMA) made certain revisions to the BIPA requirements, including reducing the number of QICs from 12 to 4.

Who are the QICs?

In the Fall of 2004, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) awarded Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contracts to 8 entities to perform QIC functions. Under this contract, CMS has competitively awarded numerous task orders, including:

Administrative QIC - Q2 Administrators

Part A East – Maximus

Part A West – First Coast Service Options

Part B East – Q2 Administrators

Part B West/Durable Medical Equipment – Q2 Administrators

Part C – Maximus

Part D - Maximus

Are there any changes for 2006?

CMS recently recompeted the Part B workload and redesigned the jurisdictions. On September 29, 2006 CMS awarded three task orders to process the Part B and Durable Medical Equipment (DME) reconsiderations. There are two task orders to process reconsiderations of carrier redeterminations and one task order to process reconsiderations of DME regional carrier and DME Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC) redeterminations. The two Part B/carrier task orders were awarded to First Coast Services Options for the North jurisdiction and Q2 Administrators for the South jurisdiction [Please see appendix A]. RiverTrust Solutions was selected for the DME QIC task order award [Please see appendix B].

The new QICs will begin accepting and processing reconsiderations on the following dates:

- November 15, 2006 - First Coast Service Options for the North jurisdiction
- December 1, 2006 – River Trust Solutions for the national DME jurisdiction
- January 1, 2006 – Q2Administrators for the South jurisdiction

Q2Administrators will continue to process reconsiderations under their current task orders until all reconsiderations requested before the above dates are complete.

There were no changes on the Part A QIC contracts [Please see appendix C].

Where can I find more information?

Please check the following sites for additional information:

www.fcso.com

www.maximus.com

www.q2a.com

www.rivertrustsolutions.com