Medicare Learning Network ®

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Top Ten Frequently Asked Questions About Remittance Advice

Fact Sheet

The remittance advice (RA) is the form you get back from your Medicare claims processing contractor that lets you know whether Medicare paid in full, partially paid, or denied the items you submitted on a Medicare claim. You may receive the RA in either an electronic or paper format.

This fact sheet presents the 10 questions health care professionals most frequently ask about the RA.

1. What are the differences between the paper and the electronic remittance advice?

You may receive an RA from Medicare in an electronic format (the ERA), or in a paper format (the Standard Paper Remittance Advice or SPR). Although the information on the ERA and SPR is similar, the two formats are arranged differently and the ERA offers some data and administrative efficiencies not available in an SPR.

Using the ERA results in faster communication and payments as well as faster account reconciliation via electronic posting. The ability to post electronically is more efficient and payment posting is more accurate.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) does not cover the SPR, so service-line information may not appear on some institutional SPRs like it does on an ERA. The SPR shows the same segments, fields and codes that are on the ERA that help you to make sure that the 835 balances at three levels (transaction, claim, and service-line).

2. Who can receive an electronic remittance advice?

Any health care professional who is active in the Medicare Program and submits claims, may receive Electronic Remittance Advice (ERA). If you submit your claims on paper, or if you send claims electronically and do not have your own submitter number and want to receive ERAs directly, you must complete the Separate Remittance Agreement form. You may allow a billing service or clearinghouse to receive the ERA files on your behalf by completing the Provider/Submitter Agreement form. Should you need assistance in preparing the necessary paperwork, contact your MAC's EDI Helpline. The toll-free numbers for those helplines are at **http://www.cms. gov/Medicare/Billing/ElectronicBillingEDITrans/ downloads/EDIHelplinePartA.pdf** for Part A providers and at **http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/ Billing/ElectronicBillingEDITrans/downloads/ EDIHelplinePartB.pdf** for Part B providers.

3. How do I enroll for the ERA?

All of the Medicare Administrative Contractors' (MACs) websites have directions for enrolling in ERA.

ERA is an outbound electronic data interchange (EDI) transaction that enables you to receive payment information in an electronic file format. If you have software capability in place in your system, the MAC can automatically post an ERA file created by Medicare to your accounts receivable system. Once the ERA is in place, the payment posting process is more efficient and accurate.

An interactive map of all MACs websites is available at **http://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and- Systems/Monitoring-Programs/provider-compliance- interactive-map/index.html** on the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) website.

4. What is PC-Print?

PC-Print is free software, which is a Personal Computer (PC)-based ANSI (American National Standards Institute) ASC X12 835 translator interactive program. It allows you to view and print the Medicare Part A ERA.

The PC Print software is available for Medicare Part A providers to view and print HIPAA-compliant ERAs from their own computer. If your current system does not have ERA capability, the PC Print software is available at no cost. This software is easy to use and will save you both time and money if you are currently receiving SPR.

Your A/B MACs is required to make PC Print software available to providers for downloading at no charge. The MAC may charge up to $25.00 per mailing to recoup cost if the software is sent to provider on a CD/ DVD or any other means at provider's request when the software is available for downloading. You may contact your MAC's EDI Part A Helpline if you need assistance in obtaining PC-Print. You can find that helpline toll-free number at **http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/ Billing/ElectronicBillingEDITrans/downloads/ EDIHelplinePartA.pdf** on the CMS website.

5. Does PC-Print provide an option for viewing/ printing the ERA that mimics the paper remittance?

Yes, you may view or print the ERA in a format similar to the SPR.

To view the entire ERA, import the ERA that you wish to view and click on the button for the All Claims (AC) screen. This screen displays the data in a manner similar to content and format of an SPR.

To print the entire ERA, after selecting the AC screen, just click on the printer button and this will allow you to print the entire ERA in the format that is similar to the SPR.

6. How long is the ERA available in PC-Print? After PC-Print is closed, how can we access the ERA?

Once you have downloaded an ERA from your EDI mailbox and saved it to your office computer, you can open it in PC-Print at your convenience. Just "browse" to the directory where your 835 ERAs are saved.

If there is a problem retrieving your remittance advice, we can reload it to your EDI mailbox. Please contact Medicare EDI at 1-888-670-0940, option 1.

7. What is Medicare Remit Easy Print (MREP)?

This software is provided for Part B providers. CMS provides the Medicare Remit Easy Print (MREP) software to view and print the HIPAA-compliant 835 for professional providers and suppliers. You can use this software, which is available free to Medicare Part B providers and suppliers of Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics, and Supplies (DMEPOS), to access and print RA information,

including special reports, from the HIPAA 835. MREP enables you to print HIPAA 835v4010A1 and 835v5010A1 files to a format that is similar to the traditional SPR format. You can use MREP to view, search, and print RAs; and print and export reports containing RA information.

Instructions for downloading MREP software are available at **https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/CMS-Information-Technology/AccesstoDataApplication/Downloads/ MREPDownloadInstructionsLocalPC.pdf** on the CMS website.

8. If I sign up for ERA, will it affect how I receive my payment?

No, ERA and Medicare payments are two separate functions. If you sign up for ERA, it will not impact the way your Medicare payments are made.

9. Will I be able to access ERA that Medicare issued prior to the date I signed up for ERA?

No, ERA becomes effective the day you sign up. You will not be able to access remittances that we issued before you signed up.

10. What other educational resources are available for the Remittance Advice?

There are other educational resources available from the Medicare Learning Network®. The other products are:

- The Remittance Advice Information: An Overview" a fact sheet presenting basic information on the remittance advice is available at **http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/Downloads/Remit-Advice-Overview-Fact-Sheet-ICN908325.pdf** on the CMS website;

- The Remittance Advice Resources Fact Sheet, which addresses the various resources and tools available for handling the remittance advice is available at **http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/Downloads/Remit-Advice-Resources-Fact-Sheet-ICN908329.pdf** on the CMS website;

- "A Medicare Remit Easy Print Software" Fact Sheet is available at **http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/downloads/MedicareRemit_0408.pdf** on the CMS website;

- The CMS Health Care Payment and Remittance Advice web page at **http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Billing/ElectronicBillingEDITrans/Remittance.html** contains other related information;

- The CMS Medicare Remit Easy Print (MREP) web page at **http://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/CMS-Information-Technology/AccesstoDataApplication/MedicareRemitEasyPrint.html** has more details on this software; and

- More general information about Remittance Advice is available in Chapter 22 of the "Medicare Claims Processing Manual," entitled, "Remittance Advice," located at **http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/downloads/clm104c22.pdf** on the CMS website.

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