

January 24, 2006

To All Part D Plan Sponsors:

The Drug Plan Finder Tool has become instrumental in guiding beneficiaries in selecting the best prescription drug Plan that meets their individual needs. It is essential that the data displayed are accurate and comprehensive. Any efforts which help prevent beneficiaries from joining a program based on incorrect data are in both the Plans' and CMS' best interest.

In an effort to ensure the quality and accuracy of these data, CMS decided not to update the Drug Plan Finder tool on www.medicare.gov this week. Due to a number of issues identified with pricing data files submitted on Wednesday, January 18, the Plan Finder Tool will continue to display the pricing data that were submitted on Wednesday, January 11. CMS expects these issues will be corrected before the data submission on Wednesday, January 25 and will publish the updates on Monday, January 30.

As indicated in previous communications to all prescription drug plans on November 17, 2005 and again on December 16, 2005, Plans are responsible for performing QA checks of their pricing data before they are submitted to CMS each week and again once the data are published on www.medicare.gov. CMS has provided the necessary formulas to perform these QA checks in the communications that were sent.

Over the last several weeks CMS has been monitoring those Plans that continue to submit problematic files. While we understand that there are many issues that Plans are now facing, our continuing expectation is that these problems will be minimal. Errors in pricing data may have a negative impact on the public's perception of the Part D Drug Benefit by your organization, other prescription drug plans, and CMS. Therefore, Plans that consistently are identified with data issues may be subject to corrective actions. Through the continued cooperation between CMS and your organization, Medicare beneficiaries are able to rely on the accuracy of the Drug Plan Finder information when evaluating different Plans.

Thank you for your ongoing support in making the Medicare Drug Benefit a successful program.