



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland 21244

TO: Current and Future Medicare Advantage Organizations

FROM: David A. Lewis, Acting Director, Medicare Advantage Group

RE: Release of Final 2008 Medicare Advantage Applications

DATE: January 31, 2007

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is posting today its final 2008 Medicare Advantage (MA) Applications to <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MedicareAdvantageApps/> .

Application submissions must be received no later than 5:00 PM Eastern time March 12, 2007.

This year, much of the application is unchanged. However, the Special Needs Plan section has undergone major revisions. In a number of places we have also clarified our guidance.

Today's posting includes the following applications:

- MA Initial Application for Coordinated Care Plans (CCP)
- MA Initial Application for Regional Preferred Provider Organization Plans (RPPO)
- MA Initial Application for Private Fee for Service Plans (PFFS)
- MA Initial Application for Medical Savings Account Plans (MSA)
- MA Service Area Expansion Application for Coordinated Care Plans (CCP) and Private Fee For Service Plans (PFFS)

Please note:

- Medicare Advantage coordinated care plans (CCPs) are required to offer at least one plan containing Part D prescription drug benefits in each of its service areas. (HMOs and PPOs are CCPs). Therefore, all new or expanding CCP organizations must complete and submit a Medicare Advantage Prescription Drug Plan Sponsor application as a condition of approval of the CCP application. This Part D prescription drug benefit is also due on March 12. The Part D application can be found via the link on the website page given above.
- Beginning in 2008, the law again allows plans to offer a new or expand an existing local PPO product.

- The regulations continue to prohibit new 1876 cost-based plans, and it also precludes any MAO from enrolling beneficiaries in an 1876 cost plan in the same area in which it operates an MA product.
- As part of your response to the Medicare Marketing section of the application you must agree and explain how you will limit the number of submitted bids in a service area to those that demonstrate meaningful differences to a beneficiary.

Medicare Advantage Organizations (MAOs) that are applying to become qualified for an MA contract with CMS for the first time must complete the entire application. In addition to the applications, we are posting a Medicare Advantage Organization (MAO) “Submissions Matrix” to assist you in identifying the appropriate items that must accompany your submission as well as a “Useful Information for 2008 MA Applicants” document to answer frequently-asked questions about applying for a 2008 CMS contract.

We hope you find the applications and related tools useful. We look forward to continuing our partnership with our current Medicare Advantage partners and to building strong working relationships with new applicants. We have designated the following individuals to answer your questions about specific MA applications:

- Local Coordinated Care Plan (HMO, HMO-POS, PSO).....Ann Moses 410-786-1167
Ann.Moses@cms.hhs.gov
- Regional Preferred Provider Organization (RPPO).....Daniella Stanley 410-786-3723
Daniella.Stanley@cms.hhs.gov
- Private Fee For Service Organization (PFFS)..... Mervyn John 410-786-1141
Mervyn.John@cms.hhs.gov
- Medical Savings Account Paul Foster 410-786-1150
Paul.Foster@cms.hhs.gov
- Service Area Expansion (CCP, PFFS).....Lettica Ramsey 410-786-5262
Lettica.Ramsey@cms.hhs.gov

In addition to individuals listed above, you may also contact your local Regional Office for assistance.

cc: Abby L. Block, Director, Center for Beneficiary Choices, CMS
Cynthia Tudor, Director, Medicare Drug Benefit Group, CBC, CMS
CMS Regional Office Managers