DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland 21244

CMS
CENTERS for MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES

OFFICE OF THE ACTUARY

DATE: February 14, 2012

TO: Medicare Advantage & Prescription Drug Plan Sponsors and Certifying Actuaries

FROM: Paul Spitalnic, Director, Parts C & D Actuarial Group

SUBJECT: Contract Year 2013 MA and Part D Bid Pricing Tool Beta Testing

We are pleased to announce that CMS will be conducting beta testing of the draft Contract Year (CY) 2013 Bid Pricing Tool (BPT). Testing will take place from Monday, February 20, 2012 until Friday, March 2, 2012. During this time, you may download the draft CY 2013 bid forms and instructions at the following website: http://hpmstest.fu.com/test/BPT2013_Beta/bptbeta_start.asp

If you have any comments on the beta BPTs and instructions, please submit them as soon as possible but no later than **COB Friday, March 2, 2012** in order for CMS to continue the development of the CY 2013 BPTs to meet the expected production release on April 6, 2012. Any comments must be reported to CMS via the website indicated above.

Please note that this beta release contains draft versions of the CY 2013 bid forms and instructions. As such:
   ·   The BPTs and instructions are subject to change by CMS prior to the production release.
   ·   The beta BPTs cannot be used to upload any CY 2013 bids to HPMS. Organizations must download the production BPTs, and use the production BPTs to prepare and upload all CY 2013 bids.
   ·   The beta BPTs do not contain certain annual parameter updates for CY 2013. For example, the MA ratebook and Part D benefit parameters have not been updated (i.e., the beta BPTs contain CY 2012 values or placeholders).

Thank you for your assistance with this process.

Technical note regarding the BPTs: HPMS is discontinuing support for Microsoft Excel 2003 with the release of the CY2013 Bid Pricing Tool (BPT). The CY2013 BPT will require Microsoft Excel 2007 or later. Additionally, CMS recommends that you use the 32-bit version of MS Office at this time. We are working towards supporting both the 32 and 64-bit versions of Microsoft Office, but we cannot guarantee that all functionality will be in place for the CY2013 BPT release. If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact the HPMS Help Desk at either 1-800-220-2028 or hpms@cms.hhs.gov.