



**BlueCross BlueShield
of Texas**

April 20, 2007

Dear Provider,

As you may be aware, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recently published a contingency plan for the National Provider Identifier (NPI) regulation. This contingency plan provides that health care plans, providers and clearinghouses *may* have an additional 12 months to implement the NPI regulation provided they can demonstrate a “good faith effort” both prior to and after May 23, 2007. The guidance offers relief primarily for compliant health care providers and health plans as they work through transaction testing and legacy-identifier-to-NPI “crosswalk” issues. **The CMS contingency plan is not an extension for coming into compliance.**

Please be advised that BCBSTX will be compliant as of the May 23, 2007 effective date. After assessing the response and preparedness of our participating provider networks, we have decided to extend our dual-identifier acceptance phase to allow our providers to further test and prepare for an NPI-only environment. During this extended dual-identifier acceptance phase, continue to submit electronic and paper claims with the following information:

- your BCBSTX provider number only, *or*
- both your BCBSTX provider number and your NPI

Please do not submit claims or any other electronic transactions with your NPI only until you have received notification from us confirming your participation in our NPI-only transition program. BCBSTX is committed to working with our providers to achieve a controlled migration to an NPI-only environment. When you have tested your systems and believe you are ready to integrate claims submission to and payment processing from BCBSTX, contact our EDI Department at 800-746-4614. Our representatives will work with you to confirm program details.

Since 2005, BCBSTX has been working to educate and prepare you for compliance with the NPI standard by providing support and ongoing communication via various channels, including the NPI page of our Provider Web site, *NPI Times* and *Blue Review* publications, and provider workshop presentations. We have made every effort to make our implementation plan as seamless as possible, while continuing to monitor the progress of our provider community to avoid any negative operational impact on provider revenue and service.

Continue to visit our Provider Web site at www.bcbstx.com for ongoing updates on our NPI implementation efforts, including the end dates of the dual-identifier acceptance phase. If you have not yet obtained your NPI(s), please apply immediately, and share your NPI with us. Further information about the NPI application process is available on the CMS Web site at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov>.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas