

An Important Announcement

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is currently auditing organizational (Type 2) health care provider data submitted to the National Plan and Provider Enumeration System (NPPES). Specifically, a comparison of NPPES-IRS data is being conducted to ensure that the legal business name (LBN) and employer identification number (EIN) listed with NPPES is accurate and consistent with information on file with the IRS.

CMS has mailed letters to organizational (Type 2) health care providers with an EIN/LBN combination on file with NPPES that is different from the information maintained by the IRS. Providers who receive a letter from CMS should update their LBN and/or EIN in NPPES immediately, as CMS has indicated the NPI in NPPES will be deactivated for all providers who are unable to produce information that matches IRS data.


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Quiz Answers

1. B // 2. C // 3. B // 4. B // 5. A

P.O. Box 650267
Dallas, TX 75265-0267

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Keeping you up-to-date on National Provider Identifier (NPI) issues at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas (BCBSTX)



A Thank You Note from Our Plan President

Dear Provider:

On behalf of our staff, I would like to thank you and your staff for your cooperation during the two-year transition to the National Provider Identifier (NPI) at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas. As a result of our joint effort, I'm pleased to tell you that on May 23, 2008, we achieved compliance with the federal mandate.

Close cooperation between providers and insurers is key to meeting the many challenges facing the health care industry, such as federal mandates. We at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas look forward to continuing to work with you and your staff to help ensure you have the best possible environment to provide quality medical care to your patients.

Thank you again for your assistance with this important matter.

Darren Rodgers



Memorize Your NPI

NPI-only is here! The NPI is the only provider identification number that may be used in Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) standard transactions, per the federal regulation. Now we'll both be using only your NPI. For example, your 835 Electronic Remittance Advice will include *only* the provider's NPI. Other documents and tools such as the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system, the Provider Finder[®] and Provider Claim Summaries will also include only the NPI.

We Want to Hear from You!

We are conducting an online survey to gather your feedback on communications you received during the transition to an NPI-only environment. A variety of media were used to communicate tools, updates and tips to support your health care practice through the NPI Transition. Your valued feedback will contribute to the success of future projects.

To participate in the survey, go to the NPI section of the Provider Web site. Click on the NPI logo, then select *Take Our Survey*. As always, we appreciate your input on how we're doing in our ongoing effort to serve you better.



Share All NPIs Used for Medicare with BCBSTX Today!

In the event of crossover claims, BCBSTX must have a record of the NPI(s) you use for Medicare claims. *Without this information, our system will not be able to recognize you as the billing provider and we may have problems adjudicating these claims.* The fastest way to share your NPI(s) with us is via e-mail on our Web site at www.bcbstx.com/provider. Click on the NPI Logo and then select *Share it!* We will attempt to verify your NPI using the National Plan and Provider Enumeration System (NPPES) registry; however, if your NPI is not found on the NPI Registry, or if the data doesn't match, then we reserve the right to request submission of your confirmation notice from the Enumerator.

Reminder: Always submit your claims to Medicare first when Medicare is primary. The BCBS supplemental claims then automatically crossover. The electronic crossover claims have the Explanation of Medicare Benefits information (claim and remittance data) that is needed to process the BCBS supplemental claim.

Taxonomy Code Update

The following statements clarify information regarding taxonomy code usage as published in the May *NPI Times*:

CMS-1500: We are still suggesting use of the taxonomy code on the CMS-1500 (version 08/05) in fields 17a, 24j shaded, 32b, and 33b.

UB-04: We previously requested that taxonomy codes along with the "ZZ" qualifier be entered in locator 57. *Please note that this qualifier and location are incorrect!* You may enter the taxonomy code in Form Locator 81, along with the "B3" qualifier.

Remember, the taxonomy code may be used to further identify the billing provider on claims. For further clarification on the UB-04 refer to the National Uniform Billing Committee Web site at www.nubc.org. For further clarification on the CMS-1500, visit the National Uniform Claim Committee Web site at www.nucc.org.

A Quiz: What's Your NPI Aptitude?

The following quiz tests the basic NPI knowledge of you and your colleagues. Copy and distribute at your next staff meeting to ensure everyone understands NPI. Use the quiz as a springboard to discuss the significance of NPI on your day-to-day business.

QUIZ QUESTIONS*:

1. What does NPI stand for?
 - A. National Provider Inquiry
 - B. National Provider Identifier
 - C. No Pun Intended
2. Who needs an NPI?
 - A. Any rendering provider
 - B. Only PCPs and Specialists
 - C. All individual rendering providers and any covered entity that these providers bill through (i.e., the organizational provider or corporation)
3. Can I continue to use my BCBSTX provider number on claims after May 23, 2008?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
4. Does the NPI replace a provider's Taxpayer Identification Number?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
5. What date marks the end of the CMS enforcement-leniency period?
 - A. May 23, 2008
 - B. January 1, 2009
 - C. Stardate 537809

* Answers on page 4.

Where to Find NPI Resources

A number of resources are available to help answer NPI-related questions and were published during the NPI Transition. Here is an overview to assist with questions now that we have reached an NPI-only environment. Please keep in mind that some of these resources may expire in the near future.

Additional information regarding NPI can be found on the following Web sites:

- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS):
www.cms.hhs.gov/NationalProviderStand/
- National Plan and Provider Enumeration System (NPPES):
www.nppes.cms.hhs.gov
- BCBSTX Web site at www.bcbstx.com/provider. Click on *National Provider Identifier* for updated information, "Frequently Asked Questions," an NPI Glossary and more. In the future, this Web site will be updated as needed.

For questions about NPI or the application process, contact:

- NPI Enumerator Call Center at 1-800-465-3203
- Send an e-mail to: customerservice@npienumerator.com

For questions about the NPI-only environment at BCBSTX or your individual transition:

- Contact your Provider Network Representative who can help you navigate the NPI-only processes.
- The e-mail account npi@bcbstx.com is no longer valid.



Mission Accomplished - Goodbye

During the NPI transition BCBSTX communicated NPI status to providers through two postcards. Once an NPI was validated and loaded to our system, providers received the "Thank You" postcard. After sufficient "testing" of dual-identifier claims submission, providers received the "Congratulations" postcard confirming their transition to NPI-only status. Now that the use of only the NPI is required on all claims and other HIPAA standard transactions, BCBSTX is no longer mailing these postcard notifications.

Images of these postcards may be viewed in the NPI communications archive on the Provider section of our Web site at www.bcbstx.com. Click on the NPI Logo and then select *Communications Library*.