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Coding/Reimbursement News

Santa Clara County Medical Association ● 408/998-8850

Palmetto GBA News

Check Provider Enrollment On-Line

Providers can check the status of their enrollment application on-line by visiting the Palmetto GBA website at www.palmettogba.com/J1B. This new tool will provide 24/7 access to enrollment application status. Click on Provider Enrollment Application Status Lookup found under Self Service Tools and Top Links. You can use the new tool to track the status of a pending enrollment application once it has been assigned a tracking number. Providers can use their PTAN (old Medicare legacy number) or enrollment Reference/CCN number to view the status of the application.

If the status of an enrollment application cannot be viewed in the Provider Enrollment Application Status Lookup tool, call the J1 Enrollment Center at 1-866-895-1520.

Balance Billing Advocacy

CMA Balance Billing Advocacy Toolkit Available

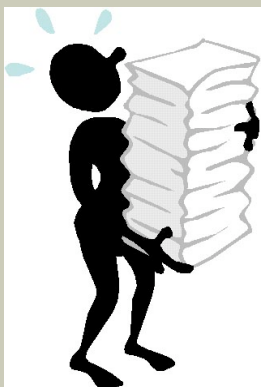
Despite the vigorous efforts of organized medicine, the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) regulation that prohibits balance billing of HMO patients for out-of-network emergency services became effective on October 15. CMA has published a toolkit to help physicians deal with the uncertainty caused by this regulation and to answer any questions they have about their rights and responsibilities. The toolkit is available to members only at CMANET.ORG or email sandie@sccma.org for an electronic copy.

As reported in the last issue of *CMA Alert* (October 13, 2008), CMA and a coalition of provider groups have filed a lawsuit on September 26, 2008 against DMHC arguing, among other things, that the regulation is unlawful and unenforceable not only because DMHC lacks the authority to regulate doctors, but also because it violates the intent of the Knox Keene Act, which is to ensure that HMOs provide adequate physician networks to provide care for their enrollees.

CMA expects that the regulation will be in effect for a few weeks before the court is able to make its ruling. Accordingly, it is essential that physicians understand the scope of the regulation and not "balance bill" Knox-Keene enrollees for out-of-network emergency services. Physicians also can take a number of steps to position themselves and to help organized medicine demonstrate why the regulation is against sound public policy. Nonetheless, CMA or SCCMA cannot provide physicians with individual legal advice and urges physicians with specific questions to seek counsel from their personal attorney.

Sign up for E-mail updates from Palmetto GBA by going to: www.palmettogba.com/j1b and click on the Email Updates at the top of the page.

Unpaid Claims Piling up?



*Contact SCCMA's
Reimbursement
Specialist,
Sandie Becker, for
Assistance With:*

- Carrier failure to process "clean claims" in accordance with State law.
- Habitual downcoding
- Treatment authorization and subsequent denial
- Payment inconsistent with payer contract
- Coding guidance