

National Provider Identifier (NPI)

What Is It?

- The NPI is the standard unique health identifier for health care providers. The NPI was mandated by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).
- Anyone who meets the definition of a Health Care Provider (160.103 of the Final Rule) will need an NPI. NYS Medicaid will transition to use of the NPI for all providers that meet the definition regardless of whether they perform covered electronic healthcare transactions.

When was NPI adopted and when does NPI go into effect?

- The Final Rule adopting the NPI as the standard unique health identifier for health care providers was published by the Department of Health and Human Services on January 23, 2004.
- The rule became effective May 23, 2005. On this date covered providers began applying for NPIs. The current date for mandated adoption and usage of NPI is May 23, 2007.

Who Must Obtain an NPI?

- Individuals identified in any covered electronic healthcare transaction must obtain an NPI that remains associated with the individual for life.
- Legal entities must obtain at least one NPI. The organization may obtain additional NPI's through enumeration of subparts. Due to the complexities surrounding subpart enumeration please refer to the separate paper concerning organization enumeration.
- Providers submitting paper claims may begin submitting NPI and proprietary MMIS provider ID's April 1, 2007 with adoption of the UB 04 paper format or the revised NYS Medicaid fee-for-service format. Although HIPAA does not govern use of identifiers in paper healthcare transactions, NYS Medicaid is mandating NPI usage beginning May 23, 2007.

How Do I Obtain an NPI?

The paper application can be downloaded from the following site:

<http://new.cms.hhs.gov/NationalProvIdentStand/Downloads/NPIapplication.pdf>

or

Providers may request an NPI electronically at the following site:

<https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov/> (check for updates as there have been problems with this web site)

Please note that either paper or electronic applications allow providers to supply and identify current proprietary identifiers of multiple payors. As many providers provide service to insureds covered by multiple related payors such as multiple state Medicaid's it is important to associate each proprietary identifier with an individual state.

When can I begin sending NY Medicaid the NPI?

- Once NPI's are obtained, electronic claim submitters should begin including both the NPI and the proprietary MMIS provider ID. This will assist NYS Medicaid in being able to recognize and properly reimburse claims when NPI is implemented as the only allowable identifier effective May 23, 2007. Please refer to the Companion Guides for information on how to send NPI in your electronic transactions to Medicaid.
- The compliance date for all covered entities, except small health plans, is May 23, 2007; the compliance date for small health plans is May 23, 2008.
- Paper claim submitters will not be able to submit both the NPI and NYS Medicaid Provider ID until adoption of the new UB04 form and revised NYS Medicaid fee-for-service format beginning April 1, 2007.
- ePACES users will be notified when they may submit NPI and NYS Medicaid Provider ID's when signing on to the system.
- NYS Medicaid will also initiate a web based application to allow all submitters to provide important information relative to NPI and existing NYS Medicaid Provider ID's

What Will the NPI Do?

- Replace the use of all legacy provider identifiers (e.g., UPIN, License Number, Medicaid Provider Number, Medicare Provider

Number, Blue Cross and Blue Shield Numbers) in HIPAA standard transactions as of the compliance dates.

- It will simplify transactions, including claims and coordination of benefits, and may save money in the long term.

What Will the NPI Not Do?

- Guarantee reimbursement by health plans
- Enroll providers in health plans
- Make providers covered entities
- Require providers to conduct electronic transactions

What Does the NPI Look Like?

- The number (NPI) is 10 positions (9 plus the check-digit) all numeric.
- The NPI does not convey information about the provider. Accordingly providers do not have to change NPI when they change geographical locations or change their type of entity.

Where Can I Find More Information?

- Inclusive information on the NPI is available from CMS at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/NationalProvIdentStand/>, or you may call The CMS HIPAA hot line at 1-866-282-0659.
- CMS NPI Viewlet provides an overview of the NPI, a walkthrough of the NPI application process and a live link to the NPPES website. The Viewlet is available under the above website. Just look under Educational Resources.
- Medicaid will be providing extensive information on our approach as we proceed with our development efforts. We will also be posting information regularly at www.emedny.org and share information in the Medicaid Update publication.
- Additional questions should be referred to the CSC call center at 800-343-9000.