



North Carolina
Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Medical Assistance
Recipient Services EIS

1985 Umstead Drive – 2512 Mail Service Center - Raleigh, N.C. 27699-2512
Courier Number 56-20-06

Michael F. Easley, Governor
Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

Nina M. Yeager, Director
(919) 857-4019

February 5, 2003

Re: HIPAA Notice of Privacy
Practices for Medicaid Recipients

Dear County Director of Social Services:

As you are aware, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) requires all health plans (payers), providers, clearinghouses, and contracted business associates to establish accountability and responsibility procedures for the disclosure of health information. Medicaid is subject to this requirement. HIPAA staff has been working on a notice for Medicaid recipients regarding the privacy and protection of their health information. A "Notice of Privacy Practices" has been developed in draft form. The Division plans to mail the approved notice to all active Medicaid recipients as of February 28 beginning in March. The final notices to all active recipients will be mailed by the April 14 deadline. Active Medicaid recipients include those receiving Work First and State/County Special Assistance.

The State Employees Health Plan will be mailing a privacy notice to North Carolina Health Choice for Children recipients.

Notification procedures for new applicants will be forthcoming in an Administrative Letter along with a copy of the notice. Ultimately, the privacy notice will be added to the Medicaid Consumer Handbooks. Until the privacy notice is added to the Medicaid Consumer Handbooks, plans call for the notice to be mailed to all MIC mail-in applicants approved for assistance. The administrative letter will give further details regarding the policy for other applicants.

If you have any questions, please contact your Medicaid Program Representative.

Sincerely,

/s/

Nina M. Yeager
Director