November 03, 2017

Re: New Medicare Cards, formerly Social Security Number Removal Initiative (SSNRI)

Dear County Directors of Social Services:

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is readying a fraud prevention initiative that removes Social Security numbers from Medicare cards to help combat identity theft and safeguard taxpayer dollars. The new cards will use a unique, randomly-assigned number, called a Medicare Beneficiary Identifier (MBI), to replace the Social Security-based Health Insurance Claim Number (HICN) currently used on the Medicare card. CMS will begin mailing new cards in April 2018, to individuals receiving Medicare with a deadline for removing Social Security Numbers (SSNs) from all Medicare cards and issuing new cards with the MBI by April 2019. Beneficiaries who are newly entitled to Medicare beginning April 1, 2018, will have only the MBI, not a HICN.

Providers, beneficiaries, plans, and other external stakeholders will be able to use secure look up tools that will support quick access to MBIs when they need them. There will also be a 21-month transition period where providers will be able to use either the MBI or the HICN, further easing the transition. CMS expects the transition period to run from April 2018 through December 31, 2019. Beginning January 1, 2020, only the MBI will be used. Additional information can be obtained from the CMS SSNRI website using the link provided: https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/SSNRI/Index.html

Please ensure that all county staff are aware that Medicare beneficiaries will receive a new Medicare card that has their assigned MBI number beginning in April 2018. Local agencies should be aware there will be further updates provided regarding this change as well as changes for NCFAST and other supporting automation systems. Please see the attached document which shows the current Medicare card and the new Medicare card with the MBI.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact the Operational Support Team at ost.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,

Dave Richard
Current Medicare Card

MEDICARE HEALTH INSURANCE

NAME OF BENEFICIARY
JANE DOE

MEDICARE CLAIM NUMBER    SEX
000-00-0000-A             FEMALE

IS ENTITLED TO            EFFECTIVE DATE
HOSPITAL (PART A)         07-01-1986
MEDICAL (PART B)          07-01-1986

SIGN HERE: Jane Doe

New Medicare Card

MEDICARE HEALTH INSURANCE

Name/Nombre
JOHN L SMITH

Medicare Number/Número de Medicare
1EG4-TE5-MK72

Entitled to/Con derecho a  Coverage starts/Cobertura empieza
PART A 03-03-2016
PART B 03-03-2016