

The Transition to the New Medicare ID Numbers and Cards

March 13, 2018

A federal law requires the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to remove Social Security numbers (SSNs) from Medicare identification (ID) cards by April 2019. CMS will issue new Medicare ID cards to all Medicare beneficiaries beginning in April 2018. Each Medicare beneficiary will receive a new Medicare ID number, called the Medicare Beneficiary Identifier or MBI. It will replace the current Health Insurance Claim Number (HICN). The MBI is confidential just like the HICN and provides similar protection of Personally Identifiable Information. The MBI will be used only for Medicare-related business.

CMS begins mailing new Medicare ID cards in April 2018, and will continue through April 2019. CMS is mailing the new cards in geographical waves. Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota Medicare beneficiaries are slated to begin receiving theirs in July 2018.

Providers must have their systems and business processes ready to accept Medicare ID cards with the new MBI by April 2018. As of April 2018, any person new to Medicare will get a Medicare ID card with an MBI. The MBI will be used for transactions such as billing, claim status, eligibility, and interactions with Medicare Administrative Contractor contact centers.

In order to be compliant, entities that submit or receive transactions containing the HICN or the Railroad Retirement Board number, may need to

modify their own systems and processes to submit or receive transactions with an MBI. Providers should refer to the CMS website for important compliance dates.

CMS has started to assist providers in their preparation for the new MBI. They have also created a webpage on their website that is specifically for the new Medicare ID cards:

<https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/New-Medicare-Card/Providers/Providers.html>.

This page contains useful information and resources for providers to use when billing fee-for-service and for patients' questions. By April 2018, providers must be able to use the MBI as it becomes available and submit eligibility transaction responses using the MBI and HICN.

Where can providers get help with the new Medicare ID cards?

The Provider Ombudsman for the New Medicare ID card is your resource to make sure CMS hears and understands any problems you're having with the implementation of the new Medicare ID cards. As the Provider Ombudsman, Dr. Eugene Freund will send you information about the new Medicare ID cards and work inside CMS to settle any implementation problems that come up.

Contact the [new Medicare card Ombudsman](#).

The MBI as it relates to claims submitted for a Quartz or Senior Preferred (HMO) member

Since the MBI will replace the HICN, and it's received in the same location as the current HICN ID, no changes will be needed from the provider regarding the files sent today. We will accept either the MBI or HICN and you should not notice any changes.

Medicare beneficiaries who have elected Senior Preferred as their Medicare Advantage HMO plan will be issued new Medicare ID cards; however, Senior Preferred members will need to continue to use their Senior Preferred ID card when obtaining services from you.

Quartz is sending the same message to Senior Preferred members. A few points from the communication include -

Things to Know about Your New ID Card

- Your new card is free and will be mailed to you automatically.
- Your Medicare coverage and benefits will stay the same.
- ***You don't need to contact us with the new MBI number. We will obtain the information from Medicare.***
- Use your Senior Preferred ID card when accessing care from a network provider or practitioner and store your Medicare ID card in a safe place.

The MBI as it relates to claims submitted for a Quartz BadgerCare Plus member

For now, providers should continue to accept the current Medicare ID cards. ForwardHealth anticipates that system changes for compliance with this federal mandate may impact providers. However, provider enrollment, member enrollment, and benefits under ForwardHealth programs are not changing because of the new Medicare ID cards or the new Medicare MBIs.