

DEADLINE FOR TAMPER RESISTANT PRESCRIPTION PAD APPROACHING

On April 1, a new regulation from CMS will require that prescriptions for Medicaid beneficiaries be written on tamper-resistant prescription pads. The April 1 deadline reflects an extension that Congress passed last fall to delay the program by six months.

The new law requires that all written, non-electronic prescriptions for Medicaid patients must be written on tamper-resistant prescription pads to qualify for federal reimbursement. This requirement applies to all prescriptions for Medicaid patients, not just controlled substances.

Because Medicaid is administered by individual states, each state may interpret the guidelines differently. However, CMS has specified that a tamper-resistant prescription:

- prevents unauthorized copying of prescriptions,
- prevents the erasure or modification of information written on a prescription, and
- makes it difficult for counterfeit forms to be created.

If you have not already received the specific requirements of a tamper-resistant prescription pad for your state, contact your state Medicaid director. The director also should be able to tell you whether there are preferred vendors for these pads in your state, and whether your state has plans to purchase these pads and provide them to Medicaid participating physicians at no cost or at a discounted rate.

A list of state Medicaid directors and related contact information is available at http://www.nasmd.org/about/NASMD_Member_List.rtf.

Further guidance is also available from CMS at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/center/intergovernmental.asp>.

More information on the tamper-resistance prescription pad policy is available on the ACP Center for Practice Improvement and Innovation website: http://www.acponline.org/running_practice/practice_management/regulatory_compliance/tamper_resistantpre.pdf.

March 6, 2008