

MOA MEMBERS
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ADDITIONAL UPDATE RE NEW 2008 MEDICARE PHYSICIAN FEE SCHEDULE AMOUNTS

Forwarded for your information and use from the American Optometric Association:

The following is another update to previous messages regarding the new 2008 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Amounts. (Updated information is *italicized*.)

In two previous messages distributed to you, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) indicated that the Medicare, Medicaid and SCHIP Extension Act of 2007 replaced the scheduled 10.1 percent reduction in the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS) conversion factor with a 0.5 percent increase for dates of service beginning January 1 through June 30, 2008. *CMS has received a number of inquiries asking whether physicians need to take any special action to get paid at the rates required by the statute. **Physicians do not need to take any additional action in order for their MPFS claims to be paid at the new rate that reflects the 0.5 percent increase in the conversion factor.** Medicare contractors are able to process claims for services paid under the MPFS that contain dates of service January 1 and after with the new 2008 rates. No adjustments should be necessary. Your Medicare contractors have been instructed to process, beginning January 7, all claims with dates of service January 1, 2008, and after, that contain MPFS services.*

We are also taking this opportunity to reiterate two points made in earlier messages:

1. The new fees are expected to be posted on your local contractor's website no later than January 11, 2008. The "Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Look-Up" link on the CMS Website, which allows you to customize your search, will be updated with the new 2008 fees during the week of January 21, 2008. However, the carrier specific public use files are available now on the CMS Website for the new 2008 MPFS rates at the following link: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/PhysicianFeeSched/PFSCSF/list.asp>.
2. CMS extended the participation decision period an additional 45 days. The participation decision period now runs through **February 15, 2008**, instead of ending on December 31, 2007. All participating status changes will be **effective January 1, 2008**. Contractors will accept and process any participation elections or withdrawals, made during the extended enrollment period that are received or post-marked on or before February 15, 2008.

To become a participating physician, complete the CMS-460 form which can be found on the CD that was mailed to physicians in November. You can also request the form from your local contractor. The form must be completed, signed, and mailed to your local contractor and post-marked by February 15, 2008. If you are changing your participation status to non-participating, please send your request in a letter to your local contractor, post-marked by February 15, 2008.

Contractors will not automatically make adjustments for providers who change their participation status after January 1, 2008 (you should begin billing claims according to the participation decision that you have made). However, they will adjust claims based on participation status changes that you bring to their attention.

An official CMS change request and an *MLN*Matters article will be forthcoming.