

From the American Optometric Association

ODs Urged to Inspect Their Listing on Medicare "Physician Compare" Site and Report Problems to AOA

As required by the Affordable Care Act, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) launched "Medicare Compare" - a new name for the Medicare website listing doctors by location, specialty and limited other search criteria. The directory exists for beneficiaries to find the doctors they need.

Shortly after CMS announced that "physician compare" was up and running at the beginning of 2011, the AOA urged members to check their individual listings for incorrect or missing information. As members began to search, many optometrists realized that they were inexplicably not named, or only appear when searching miles away from the actual geographic location of their practice, even though they have a complete and correct Medicare enrollment record in the PECOS database.

AOA raised concerns about the directory's unlisted or mislisted optometrists with CMS. Late last month, CMS updated the directory and many of the missing names identified by AOA members now appear. CMS has also pledged to try to fix the flaws in the mapping software and to investigate the reason why many doctors remain unlisted. This problem affects many physician specialties.

AOA expects CMS to make another update this month. Some Medicare carriers and contractors have told optometrists that the listings are updated less frequently. **AOA again asks members - particularly those who found problems previously - to check their listing for missing or inaccurate information at <http://www.medicare.gov/find-a-doctor/provider-search.aspx>.**

If members do uncover a problem, CMS provides some guidance on fixing errors in the listings: <http://www.medicare.gov/find-a-doctor/staticpages/note/overview.aspx>

For doctors who are properly enrolled in Medicare (in the PECOS database) yet unlisted on the Physician Compare website, AOA asks you to compare your Medicare information to your listing in the NPI registry at <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov/NPPES/NPIRegistryHome.do> and then send your name, NPI, and city/state to Rodney Peele in the AOA Washington Office at rpee@aoa.org.

For more information, members can read a background article covering this issue on the AOA website at <http://www.aoa.org/x17270.xml>