

MOA MEMBERS
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NPI/EIN/SSN QUESTIONS – FORWARDED FYI FROM THE AOA

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We had some NPI/ENI/SSN questions for CMS. Please see the questions and CMS' answers in purple below. This may help some of you who are experiencing these same issues. Kelly

We now have major problems with NPI's and linking to either EIN or SSN's.

NPPES linked all individual providers to their SSN's. This is because the SSN is an individual's TIN. The NPI Application form asks for the TIN of the provider. If a sole proprietor has an EIN, NPPES does not capture it because, while that EIN can be used in lieu of the TIN, it is not the TIN. NPPES requires the SSN to verify with the Social Security Administration (not the Internal Revenue Service) the identity of the individual applying for the NPI. Now with most insurance companies the NPI does not match because they have the provider's EIN on file. They should also have the individual's SSN on file. If they don't, there is enough other information in NPPES to ensure insurance companies can match individuals in NPPES to their enrolled individuals.

I spoke to Brianna at NPPES today (06/13/08), she says their system will not allow an individual provider to be linked to EIN, only the SSN. This is correct. The system was designed this way to ensure that we could verify the uniqueness of a person by having their SSN. If they want their EIN linked they must get a group NPI even though they are a sole proprietor. NPPES is required to ensure the unique identity of a provider—and for an individual, the most precise way to do this is via the SSN. NPPES will not recognize a sole proprietor with an EIN. Correct. But health plans must.

This is causing major problems. The local Medicare carrier has NPI linked to SSN, while DMERC and most of the private insurance companies have the NPI linked to EIN. This is true. Most entities enrolled by the National Supplier Clearinghouse (the NSC), whose claims are paid by the DMERCs, are enrolled as "organizations." If these supplies experience claims problems with Medicare, they should call the DMERC's Customer Service Line and report their claims problem. The Customer Service Representative will ask for certain information and will forward the information to the NPI Coordination Team (every DMERC has one). The Team will investigate. If the Team determines that an (organization) NSC Number should be linked to a (individual, Entity type 1) NPI, the Team will

request the Medicare Crosswalk to link them together. The Crosswalk will do so. The claims will then process smoothly.

These sole proprietors should not be getting group (organization, Entity type 2) NPI's. We agree. This needs to be straightened out in the claims process as explained above.

The local Medicare carrier says the only way to get linked to EIN is for provider to fill out an 855 (36 pages) and go to direct deposit. Follow the directions given above. Direct deposit is a requirement for any new Medicare provider/supplier or any enrolled provider/supplier who is not already receiving Medicare payments by direct deposit; it has nothing to do with NPI implementation. Eventually, all Medicare providers will be required to go this route.