

*A Sonic Healthcare Company*

**Client Communication**

 MEDICARE CARD CHANGES

Earlier this year CMS started removing Social Security Numbers (SSNs) from all Medicare cards. A new Medicare Beneficiary Identifier (MBI) will replace the SSN-based Health Insurance Claim Number (HICN) on the new Medicare cards for Medicare transactions like billing, eligibility status, and claim status.

CMS currently uses an SSN-based HICN to identify people with Medicare and administer the program, and used the HICN with our business partners.

Under the new system, for each person enrolled in Medicare, CMS will assign and mail a new Medicare card to every member.

**The MBI is confidential like the SSN and should be protected as Personally Identifiable Information.**

**Why are the new Medicare cards important?**

The biggest reason for taking the SSN off of Medicare cards is to fight medical identity theft for people with Medicare. By replacing the SSN-based HICN on all Medicare cards, we can better protect the private health care and financial information as well as federal health care benefit and service payments.

It is critical to update your information for patients who have received their new cards! The new Medicare numbers should be updated for all service claims, submitted on orders for services and used in the traditional ways the original Medicare cards would have been used.

 **How will the MBI look?**

The MBI will clearly be different than the HICN and RRB number. It will be:

• 11-characters in length.

 • Made up only of numbers and uppercase letters (no special characters); if you use lowercase letters, our system will convert

 them to uppercase letters.

Each MBI is unique, randomly generated, and the characters are "non-intelligent," which means they don't have any hidden or special meaning.

The MBI doesn’t use the letters S, L, O, I, B, and Z to avoid confusion between some letters and numbers (e.g., between “0” and “O”).

Learn more about the MBI formats at <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/New-Medicare-Card/Understanding-the-MBI.pdf> to make changes to your systems.

This information and more may be found at <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/New-Medicare-Card/index.html> and

<https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/new-medicare-cards-offer-greater-protection-more-577-million-americans>.

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