

Special Bulletin

October 2005

Highmark HIPAA Contingency Plan Ending for Electronic Remittance

You have been identified as recently receiving non-HIPAA-compliant electronic remittances. If your electronic remittance advice (ERA) process has not been transitioned to receive the HIPAA-mandated format, this announcement impacts you. If you have recently made the transition to receive the HIPAA-mandated ERA, please disregard this notice. However, if you are unsure of your ERA compliance status, please contact your software vendor, billing service or clearinghouse to determine the necessary steps to achieve compliance.

Highmark will discontinue the creation of non-HIPAA-compliant ERA formats effective Dec. 12, 2005.

As of the Dec. 16, 2005, remittance cycle, ERAs transmitted by Highmark, for any of the payers for which we process claims, will be in the HIPAA-mandated version only. All providers, billing services and clearinghouses will only receive the HIPAA-mandated format for ERA. This notification is a follow-up to previous announcements regarding Highmark's HIPAA contingency plan for electronic transactions.

Administrative Impacts of Not Achieving ERA Compliance

Highmark strongly encourages every provider, software vendor, billing service and clearinghouse to press forward with the steps necessary to achieve ERA compliance before Dec. 12, 2005. Providers who do not achieve compliance will have to perform manual accounts receivable posting through use of paper explanation of benefits (EOB) notices, which could result in your office having higher administrative costs or posting backlogs.

Note: If you do not achieve compliance by Dec. 12, 2005, and revert to the paper EOB process, we cannot generate HIPAA-mandated ERA transactions for past or missed payment cycles.

Testing Resources Are Available

Highmark can produce test ERA HIPAA-mandated transactions containing your weekly production ERA data currently transmitted in non-HIPAA-compliant ERA formats. Your non-HIPAA-compliant ERAs will continue during your testing period. To request ERA test files, complete the electronic "835 Transaction — Production Parallel Request Form" that is available on Highmark's Provider Resource Center. To access this form, hover over the link titled *Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) Services* and click on *Sign-Up*.

Do you have questions? Your first point of contact regarding status of ERA compliance is your software vendor, billing service or clearinghouse.

If you have additional questions or need more information on ERA, you may contact EDI Operations, toll-free, at 1-800-992-0246.

