

Revisions to the Important Message from Medicare

March 23, 2007

1. Consumer testing of the IM notice occurred during the week of March 12, 2007 after public comments were reviewed and the notice had been revised.
2. Page 1, Patient Information: We removed the “Date of Notice” line based on public comments that the date of notice may be different from the date the beneficiary or representative receives the notice and may cause confusion.
3. Page 1, Your Rights as Hospital Inpatient:
 - ❖ We changed the word “Patient” to “Inpatient” to clarify that these notices apply to inpatient settings only.
 - ❖ We removed language referring to the Medicare Health Plan based on public comment that this language caused confusion. We removed the words “or your plan” the third bullet based on public comments that health plans do not order services and based on plain language recommendations.
 - ❖ We revised the language describing the patients’ rights based on recommendations from CMS’ Beneficiary Education and Analysis Group (BEAG) who consumer tested the notice.
 - ❖ We also added a bullet stating that the beneficiary can call the QIO for quality of care concerns based on information currently contained in the Medicare and You 2007 booklet.
4. Page 1, Your Hospital Discharge and Medicare Appeal Rights:
 - ❖ We shortened this title to “Your Medicare Discharge Rights” and revised this section based on consumer testing and plain language recommendations made by CMS staff who work with beneficiary notices.
 - ❖ We added a bullet stating that the beneficiary may call 1-800 Medicare if they do not feel they have enough time to consider their rights based on concerns that beneficiaries may be given the notice on their way out of the hospital.
5. Page 1, Signature: We added instruction for the beneficiary or representative to both sign and date the notice, based on public comment.
6. Page 2, Top: We revised the wording and formatting of this section based on public comments and consumer testing. For example, we put the process into numbered steps and added information on when the appeal would start.
7. Page 2, You Have Other Appeal Rights: All changes to this section were made based on consumer testing plain language recommendations and recommendations from appeals policy staff.
8. Page 2: We added an “Additional Information” space based on public comments requesting that hospitals be able to add signature lines for hospital staff documentation.