

**Supporting Statement B for the  
QIC Demonstration Evaluation Contractor  
(QDEC): Analyze Medicare Appeals to  
Conduct Formal Discussions and  
Reopenings with DME Suppliers and Part A  
Providers  
(CMS-10633/OMB control number: 0938-1348)**

**Attachment B: Key Informant Interview  
Instrument and Recruitment Materials**

**June 1, 2020**

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Center for Medicare (CM)

Medicare Enrollment and Appeals Group (MEAG)

Division of Appeals Operations (DAO)

7500 Security Boulevard

Baltimore, MD 21244

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# Appendix A. DME Key Informant Interview Invitation



[CONTACTNAME]  
[SUPPLIERNAME]  
[SUPPLIER ADDRESS]  
[SUPPLIER CITY], [SUPPLIER STATE] [SUPPLIER ZIP]

[Date]

Dear [CONTACTNAME],

Our records show that you participated in a telephone discussion related to a Medicare durable medical equipment (DME) claim on [DISCUSSIONDATE].

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has contracted with IMPAQ International to evaluate the Formal Telephone Discussion Demonstration and Reopenings Process Demonstration (the Telephone Demonstration). As part of the evaluation, IMPAQ International is conducting follow-up interviews with a group of suppliers to better understand your experiences with formal discussions and your opinions about the Demonstration overall.

We would like to schedule a telephone conference with a representative of your firm who is most knowledgeable about the formal discussion in which you participated. The call will take less than 30 minutes, and your responses will be shared only in summary, general form. Your identity will remain confidential to IMPAQ, and will not be shared with CMS.

Your participation will help us provide CMS valuable information to help assess how well the Demonstration is working and how it can be improved.

A member of our team will be in touch with you soon to identify a convenient time for a short interview.

In the interim, if you have any questions please contact the Evaluation Team at [DME-Discussions@impaqint.com](mailto:DME-Discussions@impaqint.com). If you wish to confirm that our efforts are CMS-sponsored, please contact the CMS Contracting Officer's Representative, Lynnsie Kelley, by email at [Lynnsie.Kelley@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:Lynnsie.Kelley@cms.hhs.gov).

Sincerely,  
Guido Cataife, Ph.D.  
Project Director  
IMPAQ International

PRA Disclosure Statement According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is **[NUMBER]**, **Expiration Date: [DATE]**.

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## Appendix B. DME Key Informant Interview Guide

Hello, my name is **[interviewer name]** from IMPAQ International. We are a research firm, located in Columbia, MD, that conducts evaluations of policies and programs. Thank you again for agreeing to be interviewed today. I am joined today by **[note-taker name]** from IMPAQ, who will be taking notes for the interview.

We are part of a team evaluating CMS's Demonstration that involves telephone discussions and reopenings related to DME claims.

Our evaluation of the Formal Telephone Demonstration is focusing on helping CMS understand what is working well with the Demonstration and what could be working better.

As part of this evaluation, we are interested in hearing about your experiences with the telephone discussion in which you participated.

### ***Review informed consent:***

Let me take a minute to review the informed consent for the interview and how we will handle the information you provide:

- We will use the information you share with us for research purposes only.
- All of your responses will be kept confidential.
- No one, except the research team, will have access to the specific information you provide, and we will only report summary information from our full set of interviews.
- You can stop the interview at any time for any reason, and you should feel free to decline to discuss any topic that we raise.
- This interview will last approximately 30 minutes.

Now that we have gone through the informed consent information, **do you agree to be interviewed?**

- Yes
- No

With your permission, we would like to audio-record the interview to ensure that we record and analyze your remarks accurately. Only the research team will have access to the recording.

**Would it be okay to audio-record the interview?**

*[If Yes, start recording by pressing RECORD \*7, then continue]*

The recording has started, for the record can you confirm that you agree to have this interview audio-recorded?

Do you have any questions about the interview before we begin?

***[If YES, answer any questions]***

### PRE-FORMAL DISCUSSION

1. Thinking about the claims process before the telephone discussion, what are the challenges you faced as a supplier in navigating the CMS claims process for DME claims?

Now let's discuss preparations for the telephone discussion.

2. What information or materials did you receive from the QIC prior to the telephone discussion?
3. Did the QIC provide enough information before the discussion so that you could adequately prepare? Probe: What else would have been useful to know before participating in the formal discussion?

### FORMAL DISCUSSION

Now let's talk about the telephone discussion itself

4. Approximately how many telephone discussions have you participated in?
5. What were you expecting from the formal discussion process? How did it meet your expectations or differ from what you expected?
6. Next, I would like to ask you about some specific components of the demonstration that CMS is interested in and I'd like you to think about in what ways did the following work well or not work well?
  - Opportunity to present verbal testimony
  - Understanding the original denial by the MAC. Probe:
    - During your discussion call, how clearly did the QIC explain why the claim was originally denied by the Medicare Appeals Contractor (MAC)?
    - After your discussion call, did you feel that you have a better overall understanding of how the MAC's decision on your case was reached?
      - (If yes) what was most helpful to understanding how the MAC reached its decision?

- (If no) what, if anything, could have helped you to learn more about the claim denial?
- Opportunity to learn more about Medicare policies and requirements applicable to the case. Probe:
  - How are Medicare policies or requirements presented/discussed during telephone discussions?
  - What, if anything, would have helped you to learn more about policies and requirements?
- Identification of required documentation, and/or the opportunity to provide additional documentation. Probe:
  - What kinds of additional documentation were needed?
  - How did you submit the documentation?
  - In what ways could the submission process be improved?
- Speed of resolving the case compared to going through the OMHA?

*[If this is an interview driven by satisfaction survey results, ask next item. Otherwise skip]*

7. We noted that your survey responses indicated you were dissatisfied with *[fill item or items from survey where the survey responses indicated dissatisfaction]*? Is this right?
  - Can you tell us why you were dissatisfied?
  - How could this aspect of the formal discussion be improved?
8. Are there any other ways that CMS could improve the formal discussion?
9. What are some best practices that you'd recommend?

Next, let's discuss billing practices. CMS is interested in how the telephone discussions may improve submission of brand new claims.

10. Now that you've taken part in a telephone discussion, what changes, if any, have you made to your billing and documentation practices on new DME claims? Probe:
  - a. *(if no)* What are some reasons why you have made no changes?
  - b. *(if yes)* Have you received fewer denials because of these changes?

Next let's discuss reopenings. It is our understanding that there several types of reopenings that a supplier can initiate with their respective MAC. We are referring to a reopening related

to the formal telephone discussions process, where the QIC looks into appeals that are currently in the queue at OMHA or the ALJ level.”

11. Did the QIC talk about reopenings while on the line with you?
12. How did the QIC describe the reopening process? Did the QIC offer to reopen any pending cases at OMHA as part of your formal discussion?
13. What materials about reopenings did you receive after your telephone discussion, if any? Were they helpful? How could they be improved?
14. Have you attempted to have cases reopened? Why or why not?
15. What could have gone better with the reopenings?

## WRAP UP

16. Is there anything that we haven't asked you about that you would like to tell us?



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# Appendix C. Part A Key Informant Interview Invitation



[CONTACTNAME]  
[PART A PROVIDER NAME]  
[ADDRESS]  
[CITY], [STATE] [ZIP]

Our records show that you participated in a formal telephone discussion related to a Medicare Part A claim on [DISCUSSIONDATE].

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has contracted with IMPAQ International to evaluate the Formal Telephone Discussion Demonstration and Reopenings Process Demonstration (the Demonstration). As part of the evaluation, IMPAQ International is conducting follow-up interviews with a group of providers to better understand your experiences with formal discussions and your opinions about the Demonstration overall.

We would like to schedule a telephone conference with a representative of your firm who is most knowledgeable about the formal discussion in which you participated. The call will take less than 30 minutes, your responses will be shared only in summary, general form. Your participation will help us provide CMS valuable information to help assess how well the Demonstration is working.

A member of our team will be in touch with you soon to identify a convenient time for a short interview.

In the interim, if you have any questions please contact the Evaluation Team at [PartA-Discussions@impagint.com](mailto:PartA-Discussions@impagint.com). If you wish to confirm that our efforts are CMS-sponsored, please contact the CMS Contracting Officer's Representative, Lynnsie Kelley, by email at [Lynnsie.Kelley@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:Lynnsie.Kelley@cms.hhs.gov).

Sincerely,

Guido Cataife, PhD  
Project Director | QIC Demonstration Evaluation Contractor (QDEC)  
IMPAQ International

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## Appendix D. Part A Interview Guides

Hello, my name is [interviewer name] from IMPAQ International. We are a research firm, located in Columbia, MD, that conducts evaluations of policies and programs. Thank you again for agreeing to be interviewed today. I am joined today by [note-taker name] from IMPAQ, who will be taking notes for the interview.

We are part of a team evaluating CMS's Demonstration that involves formal telephone discussions and reopenings related to Part A claims.

Our evaluation of the Formal Telephone Demonstration is focusing on helping CMS understand what is working well with the Demonstration and what could be working better.

As part of this evaluation, we are interested in hearing about your experiences with the formal telephone discussion in which you participated.

### ***Review informed consent:***

Let me take a minute to review the informed consent for the interview and how we will handle the information you provide:

- We will use the information you share with us for research purposes only.
- All of your responses will be kept confidential.
- No one, except the research team, will have access to the specific information you provide, and we will only report summary information from our full set of interviews.
- You can stop the interview at any time for any reason, and you should feel free to decline to discuss any topic that we raise.
- This interview will last approximately 30 minutes.

Now that we have gone through the informed consent information, **do you agree to be interviewed?**

- Yes
- No

With your permission, we would like to audio-record the interview to ensure that we record and analyze your remarks accurately. Only the research team will have access to the recording. **Would it be okay to audio-record the interview?**

Do you have any questions about the interview before we begin?

***[If YES, answer any questions]***

### **PRE-FORMAL DISCUSSION**

1. Thinking about the claims process before the formal telephone discussion, what are the challenges you face as a provider in navigating the CMS claims process for Part A claims?

Now let's discuss preparations for the telephone discussion.

2. What information or materials did you receive from the QIC prior to the telephone discussion?
3. Did the QIC provide enough information before the discussion so that you could adequately prepare? Probe: What else would have been useful to know before participating in the formal discussion?

## FORMAL DISCUSSION

Now let's talk about the telephone discussion itself.

4. Approximately how many telephone discussions have you participated in?
5. What were you expecting from the formal discussion process? How did it meet your expectations or differ from what you expected?
6. Next, I would like to ask you about some specific components of the demonstration that CMS is interested in and I'd like you to think about in what ways did the following work well or not work well.
  - Opportunity to present verbal testimony
  - Understanding the original denial by the MAC. Probe:
    - During your discussion call, how clearly did the QIC explain why the claim was originally denied by the Medicare Appeals Contractor (MAC)?
    - After your discussion call, did you feel that you have a better overall understanding of how the MAC's decision on your case was reached?
      - (If yes) What was most helpful for helping you to understand the MAC's decision?
      - (If no) What, if anything, could have helped you to learn more about the claim denial?
  - Opportunity to learn more about Medicare policies and requirements applicable to the case. Probe:
    - How are Medicare policies or requirements presented/discussed during telephone discussions?
    - What, if anything, would have helped you to learn more about policies and requirements?

- Identification of required documentation, and/or the opportunity to provide additional documentation. Probe:
  - What kinds of additional documentation were needed?
  - How do you submit the documentation?
  - In what ways could the submission process be improved?
- Speed of resolving the case compared to going through the OMHA?

*[If this is an interview driven by satisfaction survey results, ask next item, otherwise skip]*

We noted that your survey responses indicated you were dissatisfied with **[fill item or items from survey where the survey responses indicated dissatisfaction]**? Is this right?

- Can you tell us why you were dissatisfied?
- How could this aspect of the formal discussion be improved?

7. Are there any other ways that CMS could improve the formal discussion?
8. What are some best practices that you'd recommend?

Next, let's discuss billing practices. CMS is interested in how the telephone discussions may improve submission of brand new claims.

9. Now that you've taken part in a telephone discussion, what changes, if any, have you made to your billing and documentation practices on new Part A claims? Probe:
  - *(if no)* What are some reasons why you have made no changes?
  - *(if yes)* Have you received fewer denials because of these changes?

Next let's discuss reopenings.

10. Did the QIC talk about reopenings while on the line with you? Did the QIC offer to reopen any pending cases at OMHA as part of your formal discussion?
11. How did the QIC describe the reopening process? Did the QIC offer to look into any open cases for you?
12. What materials about reopenings did you receive after your telephone discussion, if any? Were they helpful? How could they be improved?
13. Have you attempted to have cases reopened? Why or why not?
14. What could have gone better with the reopenings?

## WRAP UP

15. Is there anything that we haven't asked you about that you would like to tell us?