

December 12, 2005

RE: New National Provider Identifier (NPI)

Dear Vendor/Clearinghouse:

Recently enacted regulations adopt the NPI as the standard unique identifier for health care providers for use in the HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) transactions and other lawful purposes. The purpose of these provisions is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the electronic transmission of health information. The NPI will be the single provider identifier, replacing the different provider identifier(s) you currently use for each health plan with which you do business. The NPI has ten all numeric positions (with the last position being a check digit) and contains no embedded information about the provider.

NPI's will be issued by the National Provider and Plan Enumeration System (NPPES). NPPES will be responsible for receiving and assisting providers with the applications, assigning a unique NPI to each requestor, deactivating and activating NPIs as appropriate, and updating information, for example.

Providers will be able to apply for their NPI in one of three ways:

- Apply through an easy Web-based application process. The Web address is: <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov>
- Paper application - completed and sent to the entity that will be assigning the NPI (the Enumerator) on behalf of the secretary. A copy of the application, including the Enumerators mailing address, is available online at: <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov> You may also call the Enumerator for a copy. The telephone number is 1-800-465-3203 or TTY 1-800-692-2326.
- With a provider's permission, an organization may submit their application in an electronic file. This could mean that a professional association or perhaps a health care provider who is a employer could submit an electronic file containing this information.

You can review additional NPI information covering: (1) General Information – Frequently Asked Questions, (2) Regulations and Standards – Identifier Standards, and (3) Future Updates at: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/hipaa/hippa2/default.asp>

Wisconsin Physicians Service Insurance Corporation (WPS) will begin accepting your 837 Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) transactions with NPIs as of January 1, 2006. Until further notice, you must also provide the legacy provider number to us when reporting the NPI. We have been informing providers to contact their vendor/clearinghouse to ensure they have appropriate programming in place to allow them to submit their electronic files, complete with the NPI. WPS will be sending you additional correspondence in the future related to NPI and your EDI transactions, along with any other related educational information.

Please contact us at (800) 782-2680 Option #2 if you require additional information.

Sincerely,  
WPS Electronic Data Services