



March 28, 2006

Dear Physicians Plus Provider,

The administrative simplification provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) required the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to adopt a national standard identifier for health care providers. On January 23, 2004, HHS published the Final Rule that adopts the National Provider Identifier (NPI) as the standard.

As of the compliance date, May 23, 2007, the NPI will be the only health care provider identifier usable for identification purposes in standard transactions by covered entities. In addition, Physicians Plus will require NPIs for all paper and electronic claim submissions from participating providers. The NPI offers several advantages:

- One unique provider identifier for use by all health plans.
- A permanent identifier that will not change due to practice relocation or specialty.
- Enables a more efficient process for health plans to track transactions and avoid duplication.

To ensure a smooth transition, providers are urged to apply for their NPI well in advance of the compliance deadline. NPI application is free, only required once and NPIs are permanently assigned.

Apply for your NPI by:

- Completing and submitting an application online at: <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov>.
- Printing an application from www.cms.hhs.gov and mailing it to the address provided, or by calling (800) 465-3203 to request a paper application.

As the compliance date approaches, Physicians Plus will notify providers when to begin using the NPI. Prior to this notification, transactions that use solely the NPI will reject for invalid provider number. We anticipate a four to six month transition period during which we will accept either the NPI or a current Physicians Plus provider ID number. In addition, we will send instructions on how to send your NPI to Physicians Plus.

Thank you for consistently providing our members with excellent care. For more information on NPI, please visit www.HealthyChoicesBigRewards.com/providers and click "Regulatory Updates," or check the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services at www.cms.hhs.gov/HIPAAGenInfo.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cindy Case", written in a cursive style.

Cindy Case
HIPAA Enterprise Manager