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Newsletter

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YEAR 2000 READINESS DISCLOSURE

TO: All Providers and Electronic Bill Submitters

SUBJECT: **Year 2000 and our Information Processing System**

EFFECTIVE: Immediately

BACKGROUND: Government agencies, health care providers and others whose computers interface with our New Jersey Medicaid Management Information System (NJMMIS) need to know what effect the year 2000 will have on them. New Jersey has a plan to deal with issues related to the year 2000.

This fact sheet contains information about changes planned for the NJMMIS that you need to know in order to determine the impact, if any, on your organization.

What are the Year 2000 issues?

Unless corrections are made soon, computer systems and other electronic equipment may confuse the years 2000 and 1900. Many business applications are required to perform calculations and comparisons based on years. Years are used to determine vital information, such as age, date(s) of services, and periods of eligibility.

Almost from the beginning of the computer age, data processing applications have been designed to store and record only two digits of a four-digit year -- for example, "98" instead of "1998".

At that time, this shortcut made sense. Almost every year in the computer databases started with "19". So the first two digits were redundant. Storing years in the two-digit format conserved millions of bytes of very expensive storage space.

NJMMIS Year 2000 Plan

Our plan to accommodate the year 2000 and beyond involves a combination of various techniques. Generally, two-digit years will be expanded to four digits for internal processing and storing data. Data exchanged with third-party entities sometimes will use two-digit years and other times will use four-digit years. Reports and on-line screens will be modified only when the absence of the century makes it difficult or impossible to determine the correct date (generally this exception applies only to dates of birth).

What you need to do...

First of all, you need to insure that your systems become year 2000 compliant in a timely manner. With a relatively short period until the end of 1999, your remediation effort should be well under way.

The following paragraphs discuss some of the issues relevant to your interfacing with our computer systems.

Paper Forms

All paper forms will remain unchanged. Thus one should enter on hard copy claim forms only two-digit years, except where a four-digit year currently is being used such as Date-of-Birth. Paper Remittance Advices, Claims Correction Forms, etc. will continue to use their existing date formats. Our NJMMIS will expand any two-digit years on the paper claim forms to four-digit years.

Electronic Media

In general, where Medicaid and PAAD are using national standard electronic formats, the NJMMIS will require that claims contain four-digit years. Where the format is unique to New Jersey, it will not change with regard to Year 2000 issues. New Jersey specific formats are expected to change late in the year 2000 or in 2001 to bring them into compliance with national standard formats. We will contact you at a later date to discuss this matter.

UB-92 Claim Format

Our NJMMIS is being modified to accept version 5 of the UB-92, which is year 2000 compliant. Currently it accepts version 4, which is not year 2000 compliant. Users of this claim format will be notified separately regarding this issue.

Pharmacy Point-of-Service Claim Format

The existing format (NCPDP Version 3C) is year 2000 compliant. Thus there will be no change.

Medicaid Eligibility Verification System

The current format (ANSI X.12 270/271) uses four-digit years. No change is needed.

HCFA-1500 Claim Format

Long-Term-Care Turn-Around Document

Transportation Claim Format

Optical Appliance Claim Format

Dental Claim Format

EPSDT Claim Format

Pharmacy Batch Claims Format

Electronic Remittance Advice Format

HMO Encounter Claim Format

These New Jersey specific electronic formats will not be modified.

Managed Care Register Report File Format

HMO Beneficiary Monthly Roster File Format

These files are already Year 2000 compliant.

You should contact your software vendor, information technology department, and/or billing office to determine that the Year 2000 issue is being adequately addressed and that the above formats can be utilized in a timely manner.

Questions?

If you have any questions regarding interfacing with Unisys, our fiscal agent, or any other Year 2000 matter, please call our Year 2000 coordinator at (609) 588-2793.

In addition, Year 2000 issues relating to the State of New Jersey in general and our NJMMIS in particular can be found at www.state.nj.us/cio/y2k/medicaid.

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