

DR. KNOW

We won't change the way you do billing...we'll change the way you do business!

An e-newsletter created by **PLEXUS HEALTH SOLUTIONS, INC.**

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You can view past issues of this newsletter on our website.

MC BILLING WINDOW *Change in Policy*

Physicians used to be able to submit Medicare (MC) claims up to **27 months** retroactively of being approved as a Medicare provider.

Since the 2009 Physician Fee Schedule a new regulation has reduced the window of claim submission to **30 days**.

The billing window is counted back from the later of

1. the filing date of the approved application
2. the date when the physician began providing services at the specific practice location

This reduced window significantly impacts practice revenues as most practitioners begin to see MC patients before the paperwork is completed and approved.

WAVE OF THE FUTURE *Online Patient Communications*

Imagine that you wake up with an eye that is red, swollen and itchy. You get online with your doctors office and explain your symptoms.

Con't from Column 1

Within a very short period of time you receive a response, via email, to your condition that has been diagnosed and a prescription sent to your pharmacy, ready for pick up.

Patient satisfaction in its' greatest form. No interruption to your day and activities, with little extra burden on the physicians' practice.

In 2009, so far, 39% of doctors said they have communicated with patients online. This is up from 16% five years ago. This is according to Manhattan Research.

Up until recently the most common digital and electronic services have been paying statements, sending lab results and scheduling appointments.

More and more carriers are realizing the efficiency of digital visits and are beginning to reimburse for this service. Currently, Aetna and Cigna pay for these services. BCBS, WellPoint and Humana are testing it in some parts of the country.

Ideally, this would be a 24/7/365 type of service with patient records available through an EMR program.

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Contents:

Someday you will say Ahhhhh in front of your computer and the doctor will look down your throat through your web-cam, in color of course, and diagnose more complicated and in-depth cases.

CREDIT CARD PROCESSING

New Method as of 1-1-10

Beginning January 1, 2010 all clients will be responsible for the processing of patient credit card payments. It's easy, go to our website and click on the pictures of the Visa and MasterCard. Fill in the blanks and you are done. Print a copy for the patient to sign (for your file) and one for them to take with them. Plexus receives an email when this portal is used to generate credit card payments so you won't have to make a copy or send anything to us.

If you process your credit cards in-house, this does not apply to you.

Plexushealthsolutions.com

SOFTWARE UPGRADE

Big Changes

The upgraded to our software has allowed us to become HIPAA compliant in the truest sense of the phrase. Now we can auto post payments, produce electronic appeals, generate more cost effective patient statements, eligibility checking, along with e-prescribing.

You can check the eligibility status of a patient by highlighting the patient name and clicking the Eligibility button on the bottom. If this button is not active this means that the insurance is not currently built in your system. Be sure to use this new and essential option at no extra charge from Plexus.

You will be getting back from the Post Office items that have been sent, when there is a change of address for the patient or it is undeliverable. Please forward these pieces of mail to Plexus.

SCHEDULING

Let Plexus Do It!

If you use the Plexus system for scheduling we would be more than happy to accept and record new appointments for you before/after hours. We will access your scheduler and accept new appointments or make note of cancellations from 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily, even during lunch.

If you would like to take advantage of this option give Jean a call.

2010 PHYSICIAN FEES

Reimbursement Reduction Not Fixed Yet

Congress has yet to stop the 21.1% Medicare fee reduction that is slated to begin 1-1-10.

These reductions have been diverted in the past, but with healthcare on the minds of so many people today, cutting the fees of physicians does not seem like a positive step. A vote on this is scheduled for November 19.

BLUE CROSS LOST LAPTOP

Affected Physicians Will Be Notified

A laptop containing names, addresses, tax ID's and NPI's for 850,000 physicians was stolen. About 187,000 of these physicians use social security numbers for their tax ID's and on NPI sites.

The AMA met with BCBS and have been told that the car the computer was in was the target, not the computer or its' contents. Those affected will be notified by mail of the breach.

MA HAPPY WITH MODEL

Four years ago Massachusetts enacted a nearly universal health care law that has become a possible model for national reform. A study by NPR shows that there is strong support, with 70% physicians in MA favoring the law. Only 7% would repeal it.

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=114008115>