ATTENTION PHYSICIANS ORDERING SUPPLIES!

Dear Physician,

The DME MAC CERT Education Task Force would like to encourage physicians to please respond to any Comprehensive Error Rate Testing (CERT) documentation request they receive from CERT or the providing supplier.

DMEPOS suppliers can only provide to the CERT contractor the documentation that the physicians provide to them. In order for DMEPOS suppliers to continue to provide the necessary items/service to your patient, they must be able to rely on your cooperation in providing any additional documentation requested. Since physicians are the ones treating the beneficiaries and are responsible for maintaining records to support medical necessity of the services they provide, this typically means copies of your office notes, pertinent test reports, and other pertinent healthcare records maybe required to support the DMEPOS items/service ordered. As it is stated in the Social Security Act:

Section 1833(e) of the Social Security Act precludes payment to any provider of services unless “there has been furnished such information as may be necessary in order to determine the amounts due such provider.” It is expected that the patient’s medical records will reflect the need for the care provided. The patient’s medical records include the physician’s office records, hospital records, nursing home records, home health agency records, records from other healthcare professionals and test reports. This documentation must be available upon request.

When physicians are unable to provide the requested documentation, the suppliers receive denials for the items billed and their payment is recouped which could result in your patient being financially responsible for all or part of the charges for the items/service received.

The DME MAC CERT Education Task Force is asking for the cooperation of the physician community. If a supplier contacts your office to request additional clinical documentation, partner with the supplier to establish what clinical records are needed to support that the service/item you ordered is medically necessary.

Section 1842(p)(4) of the Social Security Act mandates that:

[i]n case of an item or service... ordered by a physician or a practitioner... but furnished by another entity, If the Secretary (or fiscal agent of the Secretary) requires the entity furnishing the item or service to Provide diagnostic or other medical information in order for payment to be made to the entity, the Physician or practitioner shall provide that information to the entity at the time that the item or service is ordered by the physician or practitioner.

Providing medical records to the supplier is not a violation of the HIPAA Privacy Rule. Thank you for your cooperation in future documentation requests.

The DME MAC CERT Education Task Force