



July 25, 2011

Go Green Initiative !

Dear Provider:

Cahaba GBA has identified that many providers may currently be receiving the Medicare Remittance Advice (RA) in a paper-based format. The purpose of this correspondence is to explain the many advantages of receiving the Medicare Electronic Remittance Advice (ERA) and to encourage you to go ahead and make the change from the Standard Paper Remittance (SPR) to the electronic version.

Advantages of ERA

The Medicare RA provides claims information regarding payments, adjustments, denials, missing or incorrect data, refunds and claims withholding due to Medicare Secondary Payer (MSP) or other situations. We realize that posting claim payments and reviewing claim adjustments is an important administrative function of your Medicare business and being able to access this information quickly and easily can be critical when appealing claims decisions or sending payment information to Medicare Secondary Payers.

Although the SPR and the ERA contains essentially the same information, the format of the ERA is different and includes more detailed information. Listed below are some of the many benefits that your practice may experience from receiving the ERA (not all-inclusive) :

- Payments can be posted electronically to patient accounts. Automatic posting of claims payment and adjustment information improves office efficiency and accuracy of account information, reduces paper costs and increases staff productivity.
- The ERA is received in your outbound mailbox the next day after claims are finalized and have met the payment floor. This saves time because there is no waiting for SPRs in the mail.

Enrolling to receive an ERA is simple. Just complete the [CMS- 588 Form](#) and return it to Cahaba GBA. Once the CMS-588 Form is received, we will process and set up the necessary items needed for completion. You will receive notification of the completion of this task(s) from Cahaba GBA and you will be enabled to download your ERA if you do so currently.

Medicare Remit Easy Print (MREP) Software

The ERA is in the American National Standard Institute (ANSI)-835 format, which is a variable-length record designed for wire transmission. To be eligible to receive the ERA, you must be able to receive the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)-compliant ANSI-835. CMS offers user-friendly MREP software that allows you to convert an 835 file into a readable SPR. It also contains reporting features that will summarize your ERA data.

The software can be downloaded from CMS' Web site **free of charge** at:

http://www.cms.gov/AccessoDataApplication/02_MedicareRemitEasyPrint.asp

ERA Computer-Based Training and Educational Events

Cahaba GBA invites you to attend the Part B webinar on **Understanding Your Remittance Advice (RA) on August 17, 2011 from 1–2 p.m. CT**. This presentation will focus on the many advantages of receiving the Medicare ERA and will provide an overview of the CARC and RARC codes. After the presentation, there will be a brief question and answer period where you can address your concerns about changing to the ERA.

[Cahaba GBA's Calendar of Events webpage](#)

For those unable to attend, the webinar will be recorded. A link to the recorded event will be made available within Cahaba University at:

<http://knowledge.cahabagba.com/Centra-CKS/login/index.aspx?auto=0>

CMS offer many resources to help you learn more about the ERA and MREP software. Cahaba GBA also offers a computer-based training course within Cahaba University that will provide you with a more detailed and focused understanding of the ERA.

- CMS “Understanding the Remittance Advice: A Guide for Medicare Providers, Physicians, Suppliers and Billers.” *Updated October 2010*
http://www.cms.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/RA_Guide_Full_03-22-06.pdf

- CMS Medicare Learning Network® (MLN) page. Under “Related Links Inside CMS,” click **MLN Product Ordering Page** and scroll down to the “Office Management Information” section to access the “Medicare Remit Easy Print Software” brochure.

<http://www.cms.gov/MLNProducts/>

Cahaba GBA believes that changing from the SPR to the ERA will greatly impact your practice. For more information, please call our Provider Contact Center at **1-877-567-7271 for Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee providers** or **1-866-419-9454 for Mississippi providers**. Visit our Electronic Billing and Payments web page at:

https://www.cahabagba.com/part_b/enroll_update_your_records/enroll_elect.htm

Thank you in advance.

Sincerely,

J10 A/B MAC Provider Outreach and Education department
Cahaba GBA