

ASCO CAC Network E-News

April 2008 Issue

Save the Date! –

The [Annual ASCO/ASH/SGO Meeting of the Hematology/Oncology CAC Network](#) is scheduled for September 19-20, 2008. More details are forthcoming. Please send any agenda suggestions or feedback to Laura Cathro, ASCO's CAC Program Coordinator, at cathrol@asco.org.

Local Coverage News

Highmark J12 A/B MAC Awarded Contract Upheld

The Medicare Administrative Contractor (A/B MAC) contract awarded to Highmark Medicare Services (HMS) for Jurisdiction 12 has been upheld by the Government Accountability Office (GAO). Highmark will be the A/B MAC for the states of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, and the District of Columbia, and will serve as the first point of contact for the processing and payment of Medicare fee-for-service claims from hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, physicians and other health care practitioners in this geographical area. All of the workload will be transitioned into the new MAC contract by the end of 2008.

For more information, refer to the [J12 MAC Award Background Sheet](#).

National Government Services Wins The J13 A/B MAC Contract

National Government Services (NGS) has been awarded the A/B MAC contract for Connecticut and New York (*Jurisdiction 13*). NGS will serve as the first point of contact for the processing and payment of Medicare fee-for-service claims from hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, physicians and other health care practitioners in the two states. As the A/B MAC contractor, NGS will immediately begin implementation activities, and will assume full responsibility for the J13 A/B MAC jurisdiction no later than November 2008.

For more information, refer to the [J13 MAC Award Background Sheet](#).

Noridian Issues New J3 A/B Mac LCD Notification Process

Noridian Administrative Services (NAS), the new A/B MAC Contractor for Jurisdiction 3, has created an [LCD development process](#) under their new MAC structure that mirrors the LCD process that Noridian formerly had as a carrier. Along with current Medicare carriers, Noridian continues to use and follow the CMS guidelines, which may be reviewed in the Internet Only Manual (IOM) [Publication 100-08 \[Medicare Program Integrity Manual \(MPIM\)\] Chapter 13](#).

To view the current and draft NAS J3 A/B MAC LCDs, visit the [NAS website](#).

National Coverage News

Processing of Drug Claims with the JW Modifier – Revised CR5923 on 3/18/2008

On March 18, in their transmittal, [CR5923](#), CMS provided additional instruction and clarification to carriers regarding the use of the JW Modifier when processing claims for Part B drugs and biologicals to identify wastage for single-use vials or single-use packages that are appropriately discarded. This modifier is currently used by carriers to provide payment for all discarded drugs or biologicals, except for those processed under the Competitive Acquisition Program (CAP). In the transmittal, CMS clarifies that it is okay for contractors to require claims for discarded drugs or biologicals to be accompanied by the JW modifier, as long as the JW modifier is not used for claims processed under the Competitive Acquisition Program (CAP).

FDA Updates

FDA Advisory Committee Votes to Continue ESA Use in Cancer Patients

On March 13, the Oncology Drugs Advisory Committee (ODAC) of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) voted 13 to 1 to continue using Erythropoiesis-Stimulating Agents (ESAs) in cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy.

ODAC made the following recommendations to FDA:

- Preserve the chemotherapy-induced anemia indication for ESAs.
- Do not restrict ESA use only to patients with small cell lung cancer.
- Modify the current indication to include a statement that ESA use is not indicated for patients receiving potentially curative treatments.
- Modify the current indication to include a statement that ESA use is not indicated for patients with metastatic breast and/or head and neck cancers.
- Require the use of a signed informed consent/patient agreement for the treatment of chemotherapy-induced anemia, but do not mandate a restricted distribution system for oncology patients receiving ESAs.

The ASCO/ASH guideline update issued in November 2007 addressed recent data on the safety of ESAs. ASCO does not yet know which of these recommendations FDA will accept, or when and how they will be implemented, but we will keep members apprised of additional developments.

ASCO has also prepared a more [in-depth summary](#) of the recommendations.

ASCO sends periodic e-mails to its Carrier Advisory Committee (CAC) Network as a means of disseminating information and increasing awareness about Carrier/LCD issues around the country.

You have received this e-mail as an identified interested party in the LCD process (e.g. State Society President, Oncology/Hematology/Gynecology CAC Representative/Alternate, CPC Member, CPC State Affiliate). More information is available at [ASCO's website](#). To submit corrections to ASCO's CAC website, or to obtain further information about any items included in this e-mail or CAC issues in general, please contact:

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