

ASCO CAC Network E-News

March 2008 Issue

Local Coverage News

Palmetto GBA MAC Contract for Jurisdiction 1 Upheld by GAO

The Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC) contract awarded to Palmetto Government Benefit Administrators (Palmetto GBA) for Jurisdiction 1 was upheld by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO). On October 25, 2007, CMS announced it has awarded the contract for the Jurisdiction 1 (J1) A/B MAC to Palmetto GBA (Palmetto). J1 includes the states/territories of American Samoa, California, Guam, Hawaii, Nevada and Northern Mariana Islands. On November 13, 2007, National Heritage Insurance Company (NHIC) filed a protest against the award with the GAO. GAO's decision to uphold the awarded Palmetto GBA contract was announced on February 21, 2008.

CMS Announces Final J4 MAC (Trailblazer Health) Implementation Schedule

Outgoing Contractor/J4 Segment/State	J4 MAC Effective Date/LCD Effective Date	J4 MAC Operations Begin
Pinnacle Part B Carrier – New Mexico – Oklahoma	3/1/2008	3/3/2008
Noridian Part B Carrier – Colorado	3/21/2008	3/24/2008
TrailBlazer Part A FI – Colorado – New Mexico – Texas	6/13/2008	6/16/2008
TrailBlazer Part B Carrier – Texas	6/13/2008	6/16/2008

*For more information on the Jurisdiction 4 MAC transition, visit the [Trailblazer](#) website.

Trailblazer (J4 MAC) Coverage for Erythropoietin Stimulating Agents (ESAs) Administered to Cancer Patients for Anti-Anemia Therapy

The list of conditions below is copied from the Medicare National Coverage Determinations Manual – [Pub. 100-03, Section 110.21](#). These conditions do not have ICD-9-CM codes, so TrailBlazer is locally assigning ICD-9-CM code **V49.89** to indicate the non-covered conditions for ESA administration billed with HCPCS codes J0881 and J0885 with the EC modifier.

- Any anemia in cancer or cancer treatment patients due to bone marrow fibrosis.
- Anemia of cancer not related to cancer treatment.
- Prophylactic use to prevent chemotherapy-induced anemia.
- Prophylactic use to reduce tumor hypoxia.
- Patients with erythropoietin-type resistance due to neutralizing antibodies.
- Anemia due to cancer treatment if patients have uncontrolled hypertension.

Highmark Draft LCDs Available for Comment Until 3/31/2008

The following Highmark Government Services (HGS) Part B Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs) have been posted for comment:

- [I-6J](#) - Approved Drugs and Biologicals
- [I-7V](#) - Erythropoiesis Stimulating Agents (ESAs)
- [R-13](#) - Radiation Therapy Services. New CRs applicable: 5818, 5699

* All three carrier LCD policies listed above apply to the state of Pennsylvania ONLY.

Recent Recovery Audit Contractor (RAC) Audits in Florida

The Cancer Policy & Clinical Affairs Department heard from many oncology practices in Florida regarding audits conducted by HealthDataInsights Inc., a Recovery Audit Contractor (RAC). A number of the audits centered around add-on codes, which included many of the 2005 drug administration codes.

Based on the scope of the audit, it was clear that the RAC did not fully understand the appropriate use of the drug administration codes. ASCO contacted the contractor and provided documentation on the correct use of the codes. ASCO also wrote a letter to CMS regarding the audits. ASCO was notified that the RAC would rescind or stop audits that were specifically related to the drug administration G-codes (more specifically the add-on codes) and that letters would be sent to providers regarding the audit status.

ASCO's involvement in these audits and efforts made to educate the contractor was a direct result of hearing from ASCO members. If you have concerns related to a RAC or a RAC audit, contact Julia Tomkins in the Cancer Policy & Clinical Affairs Department at 703-299-1050 or tomkinsj@asco.org.

CMS recently released a report on the status of the RAC program in which the agency announced that \$371.5 million was recovered by RACs in 2007. The full status report can be accessed on the [CMS website](#).

National Coverage News

New ESA Instruction Sheet Available on ASCO Web site

A [new instruction sheet](#) on reporting hematocrit/hemoglobin in conjunction with claims for Erythropoiesis Stimulating Agents (ESAs) and other anti-anemia drugs is now available on the ASCO Web site.

Other CMS News

Medicare Contractor Provider Satisfaction Survey (MCPSS) Results for 2007

Physicians and other healthcare providers are asked to complete a Medicare Contractor Provider

Satisfaction Survey (MCPSS) each year. Last year, in 2007, CMS randomly selected 35,000 physicians and other providers to complete the survey. More than 65% of those who were sent a study completed it.

Dr. William Rogers of the CMS Physicians Regulatory Issues Team (PRIT) summarized the results for the 2007 MCPSS, and the report can be found on the [CMS website](#). Carriers scored from a low of 4.12 for Noridian Services to a high of 4.66 for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas. CMS states that they are using this data as they transition to MAC contractors. They are requiring that the Medicare Administrative Contractors keep their satisfaction scores within a narrow range. In addition the MACs award fee will be affected by the MCPSS score.

Off-Label Updates

ASCO Requests Recognition of NCCN and DrugPoints Compendia for Off-label Coverage of Anti-cancer Drugs

On February 11, ASCO sent letters to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) requesting that the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) [Drugs & Biologics Compendium](#) and the [DrugPoints Compendium](#) both be recognized as authoritative compendia for off-label coverage of anti-cancer drugs.

Section 1861(t)(2) of the Social Security Act establishes a special coverage rule for drugs used in cancer chemotherapy regimens. The provision requires Medicare to cover Part B drugs administered in physician offices and hospitals when used for indications approved by the FDA, and, in the case of unapproved uses of approved drugs, when the uses are supported by citations listed in the Act. This Section currently lists certain compendia and allows CMS to identify additional authoritative compendia. CMS recently initiated a process to review on an annual basis possible additions to the current list of compendia.

ASCO believes that both the NCCN and DrugPoints Compendia meet CMS's definition of compendia and satisfy the desirable characteristics of a compendium as defined by the Medicare Evidence Development and Coverage Advisory Committee (MedCAC).

New FDA Approval

FDA Grants Approval for bevacizumab (Avastin®, Genentech, Inc.) for Non-Chemotherapeutic Metastatic Breast Cancer Treatment

On February 22, 2008, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration granted accelerated approval for bevacizumab (Avastin®, Genentech, Inc.) to be used in combination with paclitaxel for the treatment of patients who have not received chemotherapy for metastatic HER2 negative breast cancer. The approval was based on the demonstration of an improvement in progression-free survival (PFS) in patients receiving Avastin® with paclitaxel compared to those receiving paclitaxel alone as a first-line treatment for metastatic breast cancer.

Full prescribing information, including clinical trial information, safety, dosing, drug-drug interactions and contraindications, is available on the [FDA website](#).

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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