

ABN ANNOUNCEMENT

On Monday, March 3, 2008, CMS implemented use of the revised Advance Beneficiary Notice of Noncoverage (ABN) (CMS-R-131). This form replaces the General Use ABN (CMS-R-131-G), and the Lab ABN (CMS-R-131-L) for physician-ordered laboratory tests. The form (English and Spanish versions) and notice instructions are now posted on the Beneficiary Notice Initiative web page (www.cms.hhs.gov/bni). Detailed manual instructions, including the official implementation date will be posted on the BNI webpage in the near future.

Some key features of the new form are that it:

- Has a new official title, the “Advance Beneficiary Notice of Noncoverage (ABN)”, in order to more clearly convey the purpose of the notice;
- Replaces the ABN-G and ABN-L;
- May also be used for voluntary notifications, in place of the Notice of Exclusion from Medicare Benefits (NEMB);
- Has a mandatory field for cost estimates of the items/services at issue; and
- Includes a new beneficiary option, under which an individual may choose to receive an item/service, and pay for it out-of-pocket, rather than have a claim submitted to Medicare.

Please be advised that the ABN-G and ABN-L will no longer be valid beginning March 1, 2009.