



MEDICARE - Coordination of Benefits

Course Syllabus
FOR
COBA COLLEGE

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OVERVIEW

What is “COBA College?”

COBA stands for “Coordination of Benefits Agreement”—the new COBA Program establishes a nationally standard contract between CMS and other health insurance organizations that defines the criteria for transmitting enrollee eligibility data and Medicare adjudicated claim data. The CMS will transfer the claims crossover functions from individual Medicare contractors to a national claims crossover contractor, the Coordination of Benefits Contractor (COBC).

As is true with every major system change, the COBA program requires the participants (“Trading Partners”) to learn new ways of handling their claims crossover functions. To ease this transition, the Coordination of Benefits Contractor (COBC) along with Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) have been conducting weekly telephone conferences with a cross-section of the Trading Partner community—organizations that have volunteered to serve as *beta* testers of the new system. These sessions have been useful in debugging the program. However, the number of participants has steadily grown and often discussions depart from the pre-meeting agenda.

The solution? *COBA College!* As new organizations execute COBAs, their technical and financial representatives may register for *topic-specific* courses that deal directly with their immediate concerns. These classes will be conducted online via Web conference, allowing participants to raise questions during and after the sessions, and to receive real-time answers from the instructors.

What is required to enter COBA College?

Courses at COBA College will be conducted as interactive Web-based sessions. Therefore, to participate in any class, you will need access to a PC with an Internet connection.

The second requirement is ***pre-registration for each class at least 24 hours in advance***. No one will be turned away—we just need to know who’s “out there.” Registration is easy. Send an e-mail to cobva@ghimedicare.com with your name, company, email address and telephone number. Be sure to include the course title and date of your expected participation.

Third, you must log on to *ReadyShow Web Conference* **approximately five minutes prior to the scheduled start time of each course.**

To do so, go to www.ReadyShow.com/express and:

- Enter Participant Passcode: 12656719
- Enter Name
- Enter Company
- Enter Email
- Click “Start”

One more thing will help you make the most of the class session. Bring along a copy of the *COBA Implementation User Guide*, because the instructor is likely to refer to that document during the session. If you do not yet have an up-to-date copy of the Guide, it is located at the COBA program Web site: www.cms.hhs.gov/medicare/cobagreement.

How do I gain telephone access to the class session?

The access phone number is 1-800-377-8846; the pass code is 12656719.

What’s the format for each class?

An electronic data interchange (EDI) representative from the COBC and/or CMS will lead each class. Each session will begin with a *PowerPoint* presentation to make sure that all participants are starting from the same knowledge base. Students will be invited to submit questions both during and after this presentation; and the EDI leader will answer as many questions as possible during the allotted time. Speaking of which...

How long is each class?

Each class will last about two hours, which is one reason why it is so important to pre-register and have *ReadyShow* up and running before the scheduled start time.

What if I don't understand the material?

Trading Partner representatives may attend these classes as often as they wish, as long as they pre-register 24 hours in advance. Before signing up again for the same class, we suggest that you carefully review the related material in the *COBA Implementation User Guide* and prepare your questions before the class begins.

Please use the Course Evaluation Form at the end of this syllabus to register your opinion about the class content and the EDI representative who led the presentation. Because the classes are ongoing, we want to make any needed improvements as soon as possible. Thank you, in advance, for your constructive feedback.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Classes will be conducted according to the schedule below:

Course Title	Day and Date	Time (EST)
Transmission Set-Up & Eligibility File Testing	Every Thursday	12:00 noon
Claim File Testing, HIPAA Issues, and the Dispute Process	Every Friday	1:00 p.m.
Financial Set-Up and Testing	Every Thursday	3:00 p.m.

TRANSMISSION SET-UP AND ELIGIBILITY FILES

Objectives

To give all prospective Trading Partners the basic and fundamental knowledge needed to succeed during the file transmission and eligibility tests. These two processes are essential in implementing the COBA program. Success is defined as (1) establishment of connection to and from the Trading Partner, and (2) the transmission of an Eligibility File free of syntax and file format errors.

Prerequisites

Students will need ready access to the Internet, a telephone, and the *COBA Implementation User Guide*. Students must pre-register for each class at least 24 hours in advance.

Course Outline

1. Data Transfer Types and Specifications
 - Tape and Compact Disk
 - Electronic Transmission – NDM, Dial-Up
2. Eligibility File
 - File Layout
 - Determining Your Record Count
 - BO Errors
 - E02 – Drug Coverage Information
3. Questions and Answers

CLAIM FILE TESTING, HIPAA ISSUES, AND THE DISPUTE PROCESS

Objectives

To prepare prospective Trading Partners for the successful transmission and testing of Claim Files, including resolution of HIPAA issues and the handling of claim-related disputes between the Trading Partner and the COBC.

Prerequisites

Students will need ready access to the Internet, a telephone, and the *COBA Implementation User Guide*. Students must pre-register for each class at least 24 hours in advance.

Course Outline

1. Claims Process from Three Perspectives: Medicare, the COBC, and the Trading Partner
2. File Formats and Frequency
3. Notifications from the COBC
4. Data Content: Delimiters, File Structure, and IDs
5. Issues Log: Overview, Error Submission, and CMS Review
6. Dispute File Process: Overview, ANSI 837, and NCPDP
7. Questions and Answers

FINANCIAL SET-UP AND TESTING

Objectives

To give prospective Trading Partners an understanding of db-eBills—an electronic invoice presentation and payment system—used by the COBC to notify you of invoices due. By the end of this class, you will be able to access your invoices online to review them, dispute the data, and authorize payment for crossed-over claims.

Prerequisites

Students must have ready access to the Internet, a telephone, and the *COBA Implementation User Guide*. Students must pre-register for each class at least 24 hours in advance. In addition, it is essential that students print out and keep handy all of the *db-eBills* Quick Reference Guides.

Course Outline

1. Introduction to db-eBills
2. db-eBills Account Setup
 - Minimum Hardware and Software Requirements
 - Self-Registration
 - Payer Account Setup
 - Schedule Download Setup
3. Invoice Processing
 - Invoice Approval
 - Payment Preparation
 - Payment Authorization or Payment Advice Processing
 - Dispute Handling
4. Payer Inquiry and Administration
5. Questions and Answers

NOTES

COURSE EVALUATION FORM

Which course did you attend (please check only one; feel free to make copies of this form if you wish to evaluate more than one COBA College course)?

- Transmission Set-Up and Eligibility Files
- Claims File Testing, HIPAA Issues, and the Dispute Process
- Financial Set-Up and Testing

Instructor _____ **Date(s) of Attendance** _____

Please rate each session on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest possible score and 5 being the highest. Space is given below to clarify your scores or to address other issues not covered in this evaluation form.

Content	Score (1-5)
1. The session was well organized.	
2. The topics covered met my expectations.	
3. The COBA College Syllabus was useful.	
4. Overall, I learned and benefited from this session.	
5. Registration was easy.	
6. <i>ReadyShow</i> worked well as a communication medium.	
Instructor	
7. The instructor presented the material clearly.	
8. The instructor was prepared to lead the session.	
9. The instructor moved at an appropriate pace.	
10. The instructor responded adequately to my questions.	

Additional Comments:

Please forward to cobva@ghimedicare.com. Thank you for your participation in the COBA program.