

REVISED ABN FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q1. What changes have been made to the current ABN?

A1. Some key features of the revised ABN 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 both the existing 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.

Q2. How long will the transition period be for use of the revised form?

A2. Providers and suppliers may begin using the new ABN on March 3, 2008. CMS will allow a 6-month transition period from the date of implementation for use of the revised form and instructions. Thus, all providers and suppliers must begin using the new ABN (CMS-R-131) no later than September 1, 2008.

Q3. Where can we access the revised ABN and instructions?

A3. The revised ABN and form instructions can be accessed online at www.cms.hhs.gov/bni.

Q4. May we translate the revised ABN into other languages?

A4. The ABN is an OMB-approved form and cannot be altered except as permitted by the accompanying instructions. The ABN is available in English and will soon be available in Spanish. Notifiers should choose the appropriate version of the ABN based on the language the beneficiary best understands.

When Spanish-language ABNs are used, the notifier should make insertions on the notice in Spanish. For beneficiaries who speak languages other than English or Spanish, verbal assistance in other languages may be provided to help beneficiaries understand the notice. Notifiers should document any translation assistance that they provide in the “Additional Information” section of the notice.

Q5. Are there manual instructions for the revised form?

A5. We will post detailed manual instructions for the revised form to the Medicare Online Claims Processing Manual in the near future. Please check the BNI webpage for updates at www.cms.hhs.gov/bni.

Q6. Where can we send questions regarding the revised ABN?

A6. Questions regarding the revised ABN can be sent to RevisedABN_ODF@cms.hhs.gov.

Q7. Will SNFs be required to use the revised ABN?

A7. No, the revised SNFABN will cover all Part B items/services delivered in a SNF and will be available before September 1, 2008. Therefore, SNFs may continue using the current ABN-G for Part B items/services until the revised SNFABN is implemented.