



Are You Ready for the UB – 04?

May 2007 will mark compliance for providers, healthplans, and clearing houses for deployment and use of the updated uniform bill ~ UB – 04. Is your organization ready to make this change? Is there an understanding of the benefits and impact of moving to this new uniform bill?

UB-04 FAQs

Q: What was the reason for the adoption of an updated uniform bill (UB-04)?

A: One of the primary goals of the UB-04 was to obtain better alignment with the Health Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) 837 transaction standard. In addition, the emerging need for additional clinical information, such as a greater number of diagnoses and procedure codes as well as the move to ICD-10, required a review of the current UB-92 form. A need to look at the public health reporting requirements and efforts to bring about a national approach on research data was also needed. An example of this is the addition of the Present on Admission indicator (POA) on the UB-04 form.

The new form also takes into account anticipated shifts in healthcare reimbursement. The UB-04 supports activity based reimbursement, which requires the listing of all services provided in order to determine payment. The new form also supports performance based payment, in preparation for pay-for-performance reimbursement approaches by healthcare plans, with the expansion of required key data elements for quality reporting.

Q: What are the differences between the new UB-04 and the UB-92?

A: While most of the data usage descriptions and allowable data values have not changed on the UB-04, many UB-92 data locations have changed. The UB-04 provides alignment with some of the additional data elements introduced with the 837 Institutional transaction. It accommodates the NPI, as well as prepares for the Health Plan Identifier. The new form also allows for the distinction of the diagnosis and procedure code set used, in order to accommodate the ICD-10 code set when it is adopted. The National Uniform Billing Committee supplied a crosswalk between the UB-92 and the UB-04 which details all of the changes on the new form.

Q: Where can I obtain the UB-92 to UB-04 Crosswalk, to understand all of the changes on the new bill form?

A: The crosswalk is available via the National Uniform Billing Committee (NUBC) website at www.nubc.org.

Who is the National Uniform Billing Committee (NUBC)? Check out the following link <http://www.nubc.org/history.html>.

Q: What is the timeline for the UB-04 implementation?

A: The implementation timeframe for the UB-04 begins in March, 2007! On March 1, 2007, health plans and clearinghouses must be ready to accept the UB-04. Providers may use either the UB-92 or the UB-04 between March 1, and May 22nd, 2007. As of May 23, 2007, the UB-92 will no longer be accepted, and you must use the UB-04 going forward.

Q: What should we be doing within our provider organization to prepare for the UB-04?

A: Any transition from one data set to another can be difficult and requires lead time and preparation for the implementation. Hopefully, you are well on your way. If you haven't done so already, you will need to begin to take steps to move to the new UB 04 form.

Some key steps within your organization that you will need to accomplish:

- Familiarize yourself with the differences between the UB-92 and the UB-04
- Determine what changes need to be made to your information systems to accommodate additional data collection while supporting the new UB-04 format for your paper claims.
- Contact your vendors and/or clearinghouse to determine readiness for the impacted information systems (Patient Management, Patient Accounting, Claims scrubber, etc.)
- Develop a plan to assign and monitor tasks to ensure you can meet the deadline for implementation.
- Provide timelines for your transition strategy and testing.
- Educate your staff.

Q: Should providers contact payers to determine their implementation timeframes?

A: If you have an active *state billing committee*, this is a great way to work along with other institutions and your major payers to determine readiness. As a group, you can proactively set up meetings with major health plans to determine their readiness. You will also want to understand how these plans will handle any of the new fields/data on the form. Discussions with payers will assist in determining any billing issues or problems proactively. As a group you can also engage your state payer to understand their readiness and data usage needs.

Q: Where can I obtain a copy of the new UB-04 manual?

A: The final version of the UB-04 manual is available on the NUBC website. The manual also contains a 'State Guidelines' section, which will supply specific state guidelines as the states supply them to the committee. There is a moratorium on changes to the manual until June, 2007, to allow for a smoother transition to the new form.

- Instructions for purchasing the manual are available at www.nubc.org/become.html.
- Information on new codes, clarifications, and other guidance will be posted periodically to the subscribers section of the NUBC website (<http://www.nubc.org/>).
- New State Guidelines will also be posted to the website as they become available.

Q: Does the CMS announcement of the National Provider Identifier (NPI) contingency plan include contingency for implementation of the UB04 claim form?

A: No, this contingency plan for NPI plan does not affect the date for implementing the UB04. The date for the UB-04 implementation remains May 23, 2007.

Contributors

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