

Operational Policy Letter #14

Department of Health & Human Services

Health Care Financing Administration

Medicare Managed Care

May 22, 1995

MEDICARE HMO LOCKOUT OF PROVIDERS (OPTOMETRIST)

Question:

Can HCFA require FQHMOs to contract with specific willing providers?

Answer:

No. HCFA regulates the federally qualified health maintenance organization (FQHMO) program and the Medicare and Medicaid managed care programs. It, therefore, has the responsibility to ensure that HMOs provide or arrange for the provision of covered (and medically necessary) inpatient and outpatient health services. The HMO must demonstrate to HCFA that its health care delivery system is adequate to provide necessary services. HCFA does not require HMOs to contract with specific health care professionals. The HMO has the prerogative to determine its type of health care system for delivery of services provided the system assures access to quality care.

Please note that state law may differ from federal law on any willing provider issues.

Contact:

HCFA Regional Office Managed Care Staff