
Program Memorandum Intermediaries/Carriers

Department of Health &
Human Services (DHHS)

Centers for Medicare &
Medicaid Services (CMS)

Transmittal AB-03-117

Date: AUGUST 8, 2003

CHANGE REQUEST 2845

SUBJECT: Contractor Guidance For Connection to the Medicare Data Communication Network (MDCN) for Real-time Eligibility Inquiries (270/271) via a Route Other Than IVANS

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Background:

Program Memorandum (PM) AB-03-036 (CR2576) contained the instructions for implementation of real-time X12 270/271 transactions by Medicare contractors. The PM indicated that already existing private network connections to data centers could continue to be supported for channeling of 270/271 transactions, as long as those requests also flowed through the Common Working File (CWF) security file and the CWF Host. However, it is expected that most of this traffic will reach the majority of data centers via the MDCN. It also said, "Requests involving the use of connections via other telecommunications companies other than IVANS can be considered if they meet certain criteria." This PM provides guidance for Medicare contractors on the criteria.

B. Policy:

The CMS MDCN is operated by AT&T and is not equipped to accept connections via lines other than AT&T. Individuals who inquire about direct connectivity to the MDCN via a means other than IVANS are to be informed that connections to the MDCN may be established directly through AT&T, or through an AT&T reseller (see 1.1 below). An entity, such as a network service vendor (NSV) or clearinghouse that expects to handle a large volume of eligibility inquiries has a number of options for connectivity. Medicare contractors must notify entities that inquire about these options. The contract options for connectivity are: 1.) Contract with IVANS, 2.) Contract with an alternate AT&T reseller, 3.) Contract with AT&T directly, or 4.) Become an AT&T reseller.

In the event a provider or NSV contacts a Medicare contractor and indicates their preference to connect directly through AT&T or to use an AT&T reseller, the Medicare contractor must notify that provider or entity that it is their provider's or entity's responsibility to contact those vendors. They must then have AT&T or the reseller contact your office to exchange information equivalent to that exchanged between Medicare and IVANS as outlined in PM AB-03-036 (CR 2576). AT&T or the reseller must decide if it wants a sponsorship agreement with the Medicare contractor, similar to the sponsorship agreement with IVANS. If the sponsorship agreements from other AT&T resellers are significantly different from the IVANS agreement, please forward the agreements to Shari Kosko at: SKosko@cms.hhs.gov or 7500 Security Blvd. Mail Stop N2-13-16 Baltimore, MD 21244-1850 for evaluation prior to signing.

If contacted by AT&T or a reseller in response to a request from a provider or entity, a Medicare contractor is to provide AT&T or that reseller with equivalent information and support as allowed for IVANS in PM AB-03-036 (CR 2576). The remaining requirements in PM AB-03-036 (CR 2576) for population of the CWF security module, etc. continue to apply regardless of whether IVANS, AT&T, or another reseller provides connectivity to the MDCN.

II. BUSINESS REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements apply in the event a Medicare contractor is approached by a provider, NSV or clearinghouse that indicates a preference to connect via a means other than IVANS for 270/271 MDCN connectivity.

‘Shall’ denotes a mandatory requirement

‘Should’ denotes an optional requirement

Requirement #	Requirements	Responsibility
1.0	<p>The Medicare contractor shall ask the provider, NSV or clearinghouse if they are an AT&T reseller (see 1.1 for the list of current AT&T resellers) or already have a contract for AT&T connectivity services with an AT&T reseller. If the NSV or clearinghouse is an AT&T reseller, the NSV or clearinghouse shall be directed to contact their AT&T contract representative and request to be connected to the Medicare Data Communications Network (MDCN) via the AT&T government services AGNS contract. If the provider, NSV or clearinghouse has an existing contract with an AT&T reseller, the provider, NSV or clearinghouse shall be directed to contact their reseller representative to have them establish the MDCN connection.</p>	Medicare Contactor
1.1	<p>If the provider, NSV or clearinghouse is not an AT&T reseller, and does not have an existing contract with an AT&T reseller, the Medicare contractor shall provide the following list of AT&T resellers for the NSV or clearinghouse to contact:</p> <p>IVANS: - WWW.IVANS.COM/health.asp Contact: Doug Huston (813.878.5739) Email: doughuston@ems.att.com</p> <p>HBOC/McKesson: WWW.HBOC.Com or http://infosolutions.mckesson.com/service/technologyserv.asp Contact: Keiko Thammovong (503.614.8811) Email: keiko@att.com</p> <p>AAMVA: American Association of Motor Vehicle Administration - www.aamva.com/products/mnu_proNetworkServices.asp Contact: Ellen Malcolm (609.601.7826) email: emalcolm@ems.att.com</p> <p>QRS: - WWW.QRS.COM Contact: Fred Jones (352.560.4264) email: fhjones@ems.att.com</p>	Medicare Contractor
1.2	<p>If the NSV or clearinghouse is interested in becoming an AT&T reseller or contracting directly with AT&T, the Medicare contractor shall inform the NSV or clearinghouse</p>	Medicare Contractor

	to contact the AT&T Business Services office listed in their local yellow pages under AT&T. The NSV or clearinghouse shall be directed to inform the AT&T contract representative that they are requesting connection to the MDCN via the AT&T government services AGNS contract.	
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III. SUPPORTING INFORMATION AND POSSIBLE DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

N/A

A. Other Instructions:

X-Ref Requirement #	Instructions
N/A	Transmittal AB-03-036 (CR2576)

B. Design Considerations: N/A

X-Ref Requirement #	Recommendation for Medicare System Requirements

C. Interfaces: N/A

D. Contractor Financial Reporting /Workload Impact: N/A

E. Dependencies: N/A

F. Testing Considerations: N/A

IV. ATTACHMENT(S): None

Version:	Effective Date: August 22, 2003
Implementation Date: August 22, 2003	Funding: N/A
Discard Date: October 1, 2004.	Pre-Implementation Contact: Shari Kosko 410-786-6159 or SKosko@cms.hhs.gov
Post-Implementation Contact: Shari Kosko 410-786-6159 or SKosko@cms.hhs.gov	