Medicare Beneficiary Identifier Formatting on Claim Submissions

August 20, 2018

Now that the new Medicare cards have been mailed to Medicare beneficiaries in the J6 and JK states, they have started to receive claims with the new MBI. Some claims that they have received have been returned to providers because invalid characters are being used on the MBI.

The MBI is 11 characters in length consisting of numbers 0–9 and most letters of the alphabet.

⇒ Letters S, L, O, I, B and Z will not be used in the MBI because they can be misconstrued as numbers.

If you are receiving returned claims due to invalid Medicare number, please ensure your billing system, vendor and/or clearinghouse is following the requirements below to ensure the MBI is entered correctly on the claim.

⇒ The MBI's 2nd, 5th, 8th and 9th characters will always be a letter.

⇒ Characters 1, 4, 7, 10 and 11 will always be a number.

⇒ The 3rd and 6th characters will be a letter or a number.

⇒ The dashes aren't used as part of the MBI. They won't be entered into computer systems or used in file formats. Do not enter the dashes on the claim file.

- MBI as it appears on the Medicare card: 1EG4-TE5-MK73

- MBI as it appears in a claim file: 1EG4TE5MK73

Please read Understanding the Medicare Beneficiary Identifier (MBI) Format for full details.

The MBI is not required on claims until January 2020, however, providers are encouraged to start using the MBI as soon as they receive it from their patients. If you still have not received the MBI and are still using the SSN-based HICN, please ensure that the HICN is submitted in the correct format. The correct format for the HICN is the nine-digit SSN followed by the alpha and/or alphanumeric suffix.