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CMS Announces Final Five Medicare MACs

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The final selection of Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) has been made. In a press release dated January 7, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced its final five contractors responsible for processing and paying Medicare claims under the Medicare fee-for-service program. The five new MACs responsible for Part A and Part B Medicare claims payments are:

- **Noridian Administrative Services, LLC** - Jurisdiction 6 (Illinois, Minnesota and Wisconsin); headquartered in Fargo, North Dakota;
- **National Government Services** - Jurisdiction 8 (Indiana and Michigan); headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana;
- **Cahaba Government Benefit Administrators, LLC** - Jurisdiction 10 (Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee); headquartered in Birmingham, Alabama;
- **Palmetto Government Benefits Administrators, LLC** - Jurisdiction 11 (North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia); headquartered in Columbia, South Carolina, with some operations performed in Columbus, Ohio; and
- **Highmark Medicare Services** - Jurisdiction 15 (Kentucky and Ohio); headquartered in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania.

The final five MACs are to immediately begin implementation activities and will assume full responsibility for claims processing in their jurisdictions by March of 2010. A complete list of all 15 MACs and the states they cover can be found at cms.hhs.gov/MedicareContractingReform. All MAC contracts include a base period and four one-year options, as well the opportunity for the contractors to earn award fees based on their ability to meet or exceed performance requirements set by CMS. Pursuant to statute, all MAC contracts will be up for bids at least every five years.

Ober|Kaler's Comments: A provider's good relationship with its Medicare contractor can go a long way to smoothing potential problems. Providers with new MACs should use this opportunity to forge good relationships with the organizations responsible for implementing Medicare rules and making Medicare payments to the providers in their jurisdiction.

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