

## Optometry Coding & Billing Alert

### Reader Question: Banish Thoughts of Replacing Provider Numbers

**Question:** Will the NPI numbers we-re required to start using in May simplify our paperwork with Medicare by replacing the Medicare numbers we use?

South Dakota Subscriber

**Answer:** Unfortunately, no. If you think the National Provider Identifier (NPI) numbers will simplify your Medicare paperwork, you should think again.

After the NPI implementation, CMS will continue to issue and use Medicare/Medicaid provider numbers, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) explained in a March 2 memo to state survey agencies (S&C-07-16).

To decrease confusion between the new numbers, CMS will call the Medicare Provider Number the -Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Certification Number,- or CCN.

The Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA) requires you to use NPIs on all HIPAA-regulated transactions, such as claims, by May 23. But CMS will use the new CCN on all Survey and Certification and patient assessment transactions, the memo specifies.

-In some activities, both numbers will be used,- CMS says. The memo is online at [www.cms.hhs.gov/SurveyertificationGenInfo/downloads/SCLetter07-16.pdf](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/SurveyertificationGenInfo/downloads/SCLetter07-16.pdf).