

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

In other news

Beginning Jan. 1, you must use the new 2011 version of the Advance Beneficiary Notice, or ABN (form CMS-R-131).

CMS originally set the implementation date for the new ABN form for Sept. 1, but the agency extended the deadline to Jan. 1 "to permit providers and suppliers with pre-printed stockpiles of ABNs time to exhaust their supplies," the agency says in a message to providers.

The switch shouldn't bring any big changes to your organization. "The 2008 and 2011 ABN notices are identical except that the release date of '3/11' is printed in the lower left hand corner of the new version," CMS points out.

What will happen? "ABNs issued after Sun. Jan. 1 that are prepared using the 2008 version of the notice will be considered invalid by Medicare contractors," CMS warns. "2008 versions of the ABN that were issued prior to Sun. Jan 1 as long-term notification for repetitive services delivered for up to one year will remain effective for the length of time specified on the notice."

A copy of the 2011 version of the ABN (form CMS-R-131) is online at [www.CMS.gov/ BNI](http://www.CMS.gov/BNI), under the "FFS Revised ABN" link.