

## Eli's Hospice Insider

### CONTRACTORS: RHHI-to-MAC Switch Scheduled For May

Two MAC regions are on hold, however.

Get ready for some payment shakeups as the new home health and hospice Medicare Administrative Contractors (HH MACs) come online.

New HH MAC National Heritage Insurance Corp. will take over from current regional home health intermediary National Government Services on May 15, NHIC said in an e-mail to providers. NHIC will serve home health agencies and hospices in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. NGS will stay on as an NHIC subcontractor, however.

The other two new HH MACs, Highmark Medicare Services and Noridian Administrative Services, haven't yet set their transition schedule, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services said in a Feb. 18 Open Door Forum for home care providers. Highmark will take over agencies currently served by Cahaba GBA, while Noridian will take over National Government Services/United Government Services' workload, the CMS official noted. Palmetto GBA will continue as the HH MAC in its jurisdiction. Contract protests in Highmark and Noridian's jurisdictions are holding up the transition process, the CMS source said.

NHIC's transition: "Intermediary work ceases, and the MAC begins to perform Medicare business functions" on the "cutover" date, NHIC explains. "Regardless of the date of service, NHIC's ... team will handle all claims processing, provider enrollment agreements, customer service, and payments on these cutover dates. This workload transfer involves pending and closed records."

**Important deadline:** If you currently receive electronic funds transfer (EFT) payments from NGS, you'll have to file a new CMS-588 form and a voided check or deposit slip with NHIC, the MAC instructs. The due date for the 588 is April 15 if you want to receive payments when the cutover occurs on May 15.

You can also ease your transition by taking advantage of NHIC's "early boarding" option, the MAC says. It will help you begin your migration to NHIC's electronic submission process. "We encourage all submitters to take advantage of this exciting opportunity and avoid last-minute changes and unnecessary delays in submissions," the MAC says on its Web site.

More information about the NHIC transition and claims submission changes is online at [www.medicarenhic.com](http://www.medicarenhic.com).

Stay tuned: Once the contract protests in Highmark and Noridian's regions are resolved, it will take a few months for the transition to the new contractors to begin, CMS said in the forum.