

MDS Alert

Reader Question: Note that MBI Can Survive Beneficiary

Question: Can I look up a resident's Medicare Beneficiary Identifier (MBI) even if that resident has died?

New Jersey Subscriber

Answer: Yes. You can still look up a resident's MBI, even if that resident has expired, according to Medicare Administrative Contractor **Palmetto GBA** in a new post on its website. "Users may obtain an MBI as long as the Medicare beneficiary information entered is valid and the beneficiary's date of death is less than 13 months prior to the date the MBI Lookup inquiry is performed," Palmetto says. If the date of death is more than 13 months prior, you'll "receive a message advising that the date of death exceeds the timely claim filing requirement. The MBI will not be returned," the MAC informs providers. Meanwhile, the date is fast approaching when all your claims will have to include MBIs rather than HICNs. Home Health Requests for Anticipated Payment and claims can still use HICNs if they include a "From" date before Jan. 1, Palmetto points out in a separate post.