

## Going Green with EDI...

The Electronic Commerce (EDI) area at BCBSNM has streamlined the enrollment process for participation in Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), and receipt of the Electronic Remittance Advice (ERA) and Electronic Payment Summary (EPS). Our revised enrollment forms are now shorter and more user-friendly: just use the instructions provided on our two-page EFT enrollment form and our one-page ERA enrollment form, and soon you will be on your way to a more environmentally friendly workplace! It's quicker and easier to enroll ... but what are the benefits of these paperless transactions? Read on to learn more.

### **Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)**

Did you know that your Blue Cross and Blue Shield payments can be directly deposited into your bank account? When you enroll in EFT, you have the option of selecting daily EFTs or a bi-weekly payment schedule. In addition to the reduction of the amount of paper in your office, here are some of the many advantages of enrolling for EFT:

- Easy and convenient payments
- Safer than checks
- Elimination of lost or stolen checks
- No need to obtain and deposit or cash your check
- Facilitation of online banking at your bank
- Faster access to funds, as many banks credit direct deposit faster than paper checks

### **Electronic Remittance Advice (ERA)**

The companion to the EFT is the ERA. The ERA is an electronic file that contains claim payment and remittance information such as which claims were paid, the amount of each payment and the status of the claims that were processed. This data can then be posted to your accounts electronically. The ERA conforms to the requirements of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and is used by providers and billing services for automatic posting. It is referred to by its HIPAA transaction number 835.

The primary advantage of ERAs is a significantly lower operating expense that is made possible by streamlined administration and decreased paper handling. In conjunction with practice management software packages that can handle an 835 file, the ERA can reduce manual posting of claims payments and reconciling patient accounts, thereby saving your practice time and money.

In addition to paper reduction in your office, the ERA provides convenience, greater safety, and increased privacy of patient information.

### **Electronic Payment Summary (EPS)**

If you are currently receiving the Electronic Remittance Advice (ERA), you will be automatically enrolled for the Electronic Payment Summary (EPS). The EPS is an electronic print image of the Provider Claim Summary (PCS) that many providers receive in the mail today. The EPS is generated in a text format, therefore no special programming is required, and it's already in an easy-to-read format. The EPS provides the same payment information that is currently received on the PCS. The benefit of the EPS is that the payment information is received in your office the day after the claim has been finalized and you may use EPS as an added tool when reconciling your Blue Cross and Blue Shield payments. However, the EPS cannot be used for automatic posting and is only available in combination with the ERA.

For more detailed information and to get started with EFT, ERA and EPS, go to [EFT/ERA Forms](#) to access enrollment forms. You may also call our Electronic Commerce Center at 1-800-746-4614 for further assistance.