



THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

JAN 14 2005

Ms. Lee Ann Stember
President
National Council for Prescription Drug Programs
9240 East Raintree Drive
Scottsdale, AZ 85260

Dear Ms. Stember:

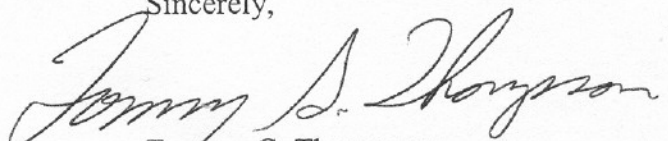
Thank you for your letter on behalf of the National Council for Prescription Drug Programs and the National Medicaid Electronic Data Interchange HIPAA workgroup, regarding the billing of Home Infusion Therapy drugs and services, and the Frequently Asked Questions posted on the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) Web site.

The Department of Health and Human Services maintains that a single standard, the X12N 837, should be used for the billing of home infusion therapy drugs and services. More information on the single billing standard can be found on the CMS Web site at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/hipaa/hipaa2/regulations/transactions/default.asp>. Leaving the decision to individual health plans would be inconsistent with the goal of standardization.

If you feel the current HIPAA standard for these services is not adequate for certain business needs, you can request changes through the Designated Standards Maintenance Organization (DSMO) process. More information on the change process is available on the DSMO Web site at www.hipaa-dsmo.org.

We appreciate your letter and the information you provided, and look forward to working with you on this and other HIPAA initiatives. Please feel free to call me if you have any questions or concerns. I will also provide this response to the cosigner of your letter.

Sincerely,


Tommy G. Thompson