

A CMS Medicare Administrative Contractor  
<https://www.NGSMedicare.com>



## **Medicare Administrative Contractor National Government Services**

### **Who Are We?**

A Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC) is a private health care insurer to whom the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has awarded geographic jurisdiction to process Fee-For-Service (FFS) Medicare claims for beneficiaries in a defined geographic area(s). In the United States, there are 12 MAC jurisdictions. NGS serves as the Part A and Part B MAC for 2 of those jurisdictions, Jurisdiction K (CT, MA, ME, NH, NY, RI, VT) and Jurisdiction 6 (IL, MN, WI).

NGS serves as the Home Health and Hospice MAC for Jurisdiction K (CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT) and Jurisdiction 6 (NY, NJ, MI, WI, MN, ID, NV, WA, OR, CA, AZ, AK, HI, PR, Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Virgin Islands, Guam) and Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics in 44 States, District of Columbia and 5 U.S. territories.

As a MAC, NGS is responsible for all aspects of claim processing in these geographic locations, including claim development for additional information, claim review, first level of appeal for claim denials and both underpayment and overpayment collection processes. NGS also effectuates claim review decisions on behalf of other CMS-authorized contractors such as Comprehensive Error Rate Testing (CERT) and the Recovery Audit Contractor (RAC) based on findings in their independent claim review activities. NGS is responsible for the full scope of provider education and communication needed for new and experienced Medicare providers, keeping them informed of new and changing guidelines for the Medicare program. Visit [About Us](#) to learn more.

## National Government Services Guide for New Providers

The National Government Services (NGS) Provider Experience (PEX) Staff welcomes you to Medicare. Providers are responsible for knowing and following the rules and regulations that apply to all services billed to Medicare under their provider number. NGS offers a variety of provider self-service tools. We also provide education tailored to the needs of new Medicare providers and their billing staff, including information that outlines fundamental Medicare policies, programs, procedures, Medicare billing and how to use self-service tools.

This guide for new providers is designed to assist you with understanding the Medicare Program and learn about the resources available to you. You'll find everything you need to be successful in this guide. Detailed information is available on [our website](#). In order to assist our providers, their staff and billing companies, we also offer a New Provider Center on our website.

**Please share this document with your office and billing staff.**

The NGS PEX team worked collaboratively to create a new marketing approach highlighting our successful efforts within the Medicare community we serve that instantly identifies to our providers and partners our outreach and education efforts. **Our Pledge** promises our providers and partners innovative solutions and meaningful education in an effort to reduce burden while navigating the Medicare Program.

### NGS Provider Experience – Our Pledge



Thank you for trusting the PEX team with your educational needs and we look forward to assisting you in the weeks and months to come.

# Table of Contents

<b>Welcome to Medicare</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Provider Transaction Access Number (PTAN) and National Provider Identifier (NPI) Relationship.....	5
Acronyms.....	5
Email Updates.....	5
Contacting Us.....	5
<b>Introduction to Self-Service Tools and Education for New Providers</b> .....	<b>6</b>
NGSConnex.....	6
Interactive Voice Response (IVR) .....	6
Educational Webinars .....	6
Educational Manuals and Guides.....	6
Educational Medicare Topics.....	7
Electronic Data Interchange (EDI).....	7
Fee Schedules and Pricers.....	7
Frequently Asked Questions .....	7
Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs), Medical Policy Articles and National Coverage Determinations (NCDs) .....	7
Forms.....	7
Top Claim Errors .....	7
CMS Resources.....	8
Appeals .....	8
Immediate Recoupment of Medicare Overpayments.....	8
Provider Enrollment.....	8
Tools & Calculators .....	8
Navigating Medicare Part A Insights for Providers Podcast.....	8
<b>Additional Educational Learning Opportunities</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Medicare BLAST & Medicare ARCADE.....	9
Stay Informed with Medicare Mobile .....	9
LinkedIn .....	9

## Welcome to Medicare

You successfully enrolled and have a Provider Transaction Access Number (PTAN), now what?

Here's a summary of what you can do to stay connected with National Government Services and ensure you have all of the resources available to you.

When	What	Why	Who
Now	Subscribe to <a href="#">NGS Email Updates</a> .	Obtain access to essential information you need to know about doing business with NGS Medicare.	Everyone in the facility who sees patients and/or will conduct business with NGS Medicare.
Now	Register for <a href="#">NGSConnex</a> our secure internet provider portal.	Fast, free and easy way to save time and money doing business with NGS – get access to beneficiary eligibility, claim status, claim payment information and so much more.	Everyone in the facility who will conduct business transactions with NGS Medicare.
Now	Explore the <a href="#">NGSMedicare.com</a> website.	Learn about our website, training materials, events and doing business with NGS Medicare.	Everyone in the facility who sees patients and/or conducts business with NGS Medicare.
Before you bill a claim	Select and register for claims submission and remittance receipt method, explore our Electronic Data Interactive <a href="#">EDI Enrollment</a> and <a href="#">EDI Solutions</a> web pages.	Providers are required to submit claims electronically with few exceptions.	Billing manager.
Before you call NGS	Understand the features available on our Interactive Voice Recognition (IVR) System and NGSConnex.  View the <a href="#">Part A Provider IVR User Guide</a> and visit our <a href="#">NGSConnex informational web page</a> .	Fast, free and easy access to information - Providers are required to use the IVR or NGSConnex.	Everyone in the facility who will conduct business transactions with NGS Medicare.
Before you file a claim correction or appeal	Learn <a href="#">about appeals</a> and the different levels of appeals for filing.	You'll want the most efficient resolution.	Everyone in the facility who will conduct business transactions with NGS Medicare.
Before you submit a change to Enrollment or Revalidate	Register for the Provider Enrollment Chain and Ownership System ( <a href="#">PECOS</a> ).	Fast, free and easy way to check your enrollment information and submit enrollment applications.	Credentialing department.

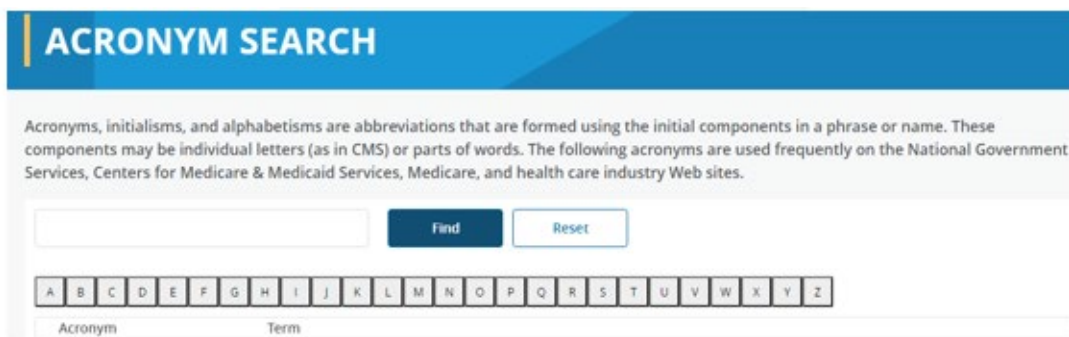
## Provider Transaction Access Number (PTAN) and National Provider Identifier (NPI) Relationship

A PTAN is a Medicare-only number issued to providers by Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) upon enrollment to Medicare. MACs issue an approval/notification letter, including PTAN information, when enrollment is approved. A provider must have one NPI and will have one or more related PTAN(s) in the Medicare system which represents the providers enrollment. Separate PTAN(s) are assigned in certain circumstances, usually for providers who own multiple locations.

While only the NPI is submitted on claims, the PTAN is a critical number directly linked to a provider or supplier's NPI. A PTAN's use should generally be limited to a provider's communication with their MAC.

## Acronyms

Our [Acronym Search](#) tool includes NGS and CMS frequently used acronyms. Easily find the meaning of acronyms by using our searchable index.



The screenshot shows a web interface for an acronym search tool. At the top, there is a blue header with the text "ACRONYM SEARCH". Below the header, there is a paragraph of text explaining that acronyms, initialisms, and alphabetisms are abbreviations formed from initial components. Below this text is a search form with a text input field, a "Find" button, and a "Reset" button. Underneath the search form is a row of buttons labeled with the letters A through Z. At the bottom of the form, there are two labels: "Acronym" and "Term".

## Email Updates

NGS maintains a free electronic mailing list to notify you via email of all changes and important, time sensitive Medicare information. Sign up for our Email Updates program today by clicking the [Subscribe for Email Updates](#) link located at the top of our website.



## Contacting Us

Select [Contact Us](#) located on the top of our website for NGS' mailing addresses and Provider Contact Center (PCC) phone numbers.

PCC Representatives are available to:

- Clarify why a claim processed the way it did, assist with general Medicare information and billing questions, provide guidance for using the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system and website, and assist with other complex issues that cannot be addressed through the IVR system. Note – each call is limited to three inquiries.

PCC Representatives are not able to:

- Provide claim status, beneficiary eligibility, information on what modifier, diagnosis code, CPT or HCPCS code to use for specific claims, answer inquiries for beneficiaries or their

representatives, or preauthorize any type of service or supply. For questions that the PCC Representatives are not able to answer, providers must utilize our simple to use self-service tools.

## Introduction to Self-Service Tools and Education for New Providers

NGS offers a variety of provider self-service tools. We also provide education tailored to the needs of new Medicare providers and their billing staff, including information that outlines fundamental Medicare policies, programs, procedures, Medicare billing and how to use self-service tools.

### NGSConnex

[NGSConnex](#) is a free, secure, web-based application. NGSConnex provides access to a wide array of self-service functions that save you time and money. Every new provider or their staff should register to take advantage of all of the features offered including beneficiary eligibility, claim status, financial information, appeal, and inquiry submissions to name a few. Visit NGSConnex within the Resources section of our website for the information you need to sign up.



### Interactive Voice Response (IVR)

The IVR is maintained on a separate line from the PCC. The IVR is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Menu options that require system access (e.g., the Common Working File) are limited to that systems availability.



Use the IVR to obtain information such as patient eligibility, claim status, deductibles, check information, and other general information. Find your IVR phone number on [our website](#), click on Contact Us and select the Interactive Voice Response System link.

- [Part A Provider IVR User Guide](#)
- [Part A Touch-Tone Card/Eligibility Checklist](#)

The NGS [YouTube](#) channel provides educational videos for Medicare providers. Enjoy a number of informational YouTube videos published by NGS and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).



### Educational Webinars

NGS offers multi-state education throughout the year. New providers and associated staff are encouraged to register and attend our informative webinars. We offer regularly scheduled webinars for: NGSConnex, Medicare secondary paper, enrollment, and much more.

Upcoming events can be found on the [Events](#) page of our website. New providers and recently hired billing staff should check this web page often.

NGS webinar attendees can receive one CEU from the American Academy of Professional Coders (AAPC) for every hour of NGS education received that they can report to the AAPC to obtain earned CEU's.

### Computer-Based Training

NGS developed computer-based training (CBT) courses which are available in our self-paced education portal, [Medicare University](#) (MU). This portal allows you to complete courses at your own pace when it's convenient for you.



### Educational Manuals and Guides

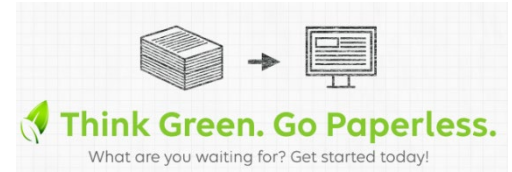
Review our training manuals in the [Manuals and Guides](#) Education section of our website.

## Educational Medicare Topics

Review a wide selection of articles developed by NGS for over a variety of [Medicare Topics](#). Select the Education tab, then select Medicare Topics. Topics include Billing, Documentation, RuralServ and many more.

## Electronic Data Interchange (EDI)

Providers are required to submit claims electronically with limited exceptions. Providers are also encouraged to sign up to receive ERA notices. To access enrollment information for electronic products and services including EDI Software, view the [EDI Enrollment](#) and [EDI Solutions](#) sections of our website located within Resources.



## Fee Schedules and Pricers

Visit our [Fee Schedules and Pricers](#) web section for quick access to the FQHC Prospective Payment System (PPS) Pricer, Inpatient PPS PC Pricer, Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) PPS Web Pricer and more.

## Frequently Asked Questions

Take time to review answers to common questions in our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) library. We update them on a quarterly basis, visit the Education section of our website and select [Help and FAQs](#).

## Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs), Medical Policy Articles and National Coverage Determinations (NCDs)

Section 522 of the Medicare, Medicaid, and State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) Benefits Improvement Act of 2000 created the term "local coverage determinations." LCDs are decisions made by a carrier whether to cover a particular service in accordance with Section 1862(a)(1)(A) of the Act.

Typically, LCDs specify whether a service is covered (including under what clinical circumstances it is considered to be reasonable and necessary), and correctly coded. They act as administrative and educational tools to assist providers in submitting correct claims for payment. Contractors publish LCDs to provide guidance to the public and medical community within a specified geographic area.

Use our [Local Coverage Determination](#) search feature to find LCDs and related billing and coding articles. Official versions are housed in the [CMS Medicare Coverage Database](#).

Some medical policies are determined on a national basis by the CMS. These policies, called NCDs, describe the circumstances for Medicare coverage nationwide for a specific medical service, procedure or device. The NCD generally outlines the conditions for which a service is considered to be covered (or not covered) under Section 1862(a)(1)(A) of the Act or other applicable provisions of the Act. They are binding on all Medicare carriers and providers. Visit [CMS' National Coverage Determination](#) web page for NCDs.

## Forms

Find the [forms](#) you need on our website. Form categories include: Appeals, Cost Reports, Coverage, Customer Care, Documentation, EDI, Enrollment, Other and Overpayments. As new forms are introduced, you'll find them here.

## Top Claim Errors

Visit this web page for the current top claim errors, instructions about how to avoid them and valuable resources to guide you in submitting your claims correctly the first time. Visit Resources, Claims and Appeals, [Top Claim Errors](#).

## CMS Resources

As a newly-certified provider, we encourage you to visit the CMS website to access more resources. You can obtain direct links from our website to important CMS resources by clicking on the [CMS logo](#) in the footer section of our website. Also, [The Medicare Learning Network®](#) has free educational materials for health care providers on CMS programs, policies, and initiatives.

## Appeals

Providers, suppliers and beneficiaries have the right to appeal claim determinations made by NGS. The purpose of the appeals process is to ensure the correct adjudication of claims. Appeals activities conducted by NGS are governed by the CMS. Visit the [Appeals](#) section of our website within the Claims and Appeals section under the Resources tab.

## Immediate Recoupment of Medicare Overpayments

Providers are encouraged to submit a one-time request for permanent immediate recoupment of any future Medicare overpayments. This allows NGS to deduct the overpayment amount from future payments for approved to pay claims. This also avoids interest accrual as long as the overpayment is satisfied by the due date. To learn more, view the [Overpayments](#) section of our website located within Resources.

## Provider Enrollment

Changes to your Medicare enrollment must be made timely to stay compliant. Report the following changes within 30 days:

- Change(s) in ownership or control, including changes in authorized official(s)
- Change(s) in practice location
- Final adverse legal action(s)
- Independent Diagnostic Testing Facility supplier change(s) in general supervision
- Medicare Diabetes Prevention Program supplier change(s) in coach roster

All other changes to Medicare enrollment information must be reported within 90 days. Visit the [Enrollment](#) tab on our website for instructional articles related to various enrollment functions such as revalidation, change existing provider enrollment information, deactivation, suspension and reactivation, and much more.

## Tools & Calculators

We have a variety of tools to assist you with a number of tasks, here are a few popular tools:

- **Prior Authorization Exemption Status Tool:** Use this tool to check exempt status of the hospital outpatient department.
- **Credit Balance Status Lookup:** Check the status of your mailed or faxed credit balance report.
- **Appeals Calculator Tool:** Determine the timely filing date for your appeal request

Visit [Tools & Calculators](#) to view what's available for you.

## Navigating Medicare Part A Insights for Providers Podcast

If you've ever found yourself at a crossroads when navigating the intricate world of Part A Medicare, then consider this your roadmap! We're thrilled to bring you a podcast that's designed to empower, enlighten, and equip you with the insights you need to master Medicare. Look for our podcasts on the first and third Wednesday of each month. Visit our [Podcasts](#) page to learn how you can join via Spotify or Apple Podcasts.





## Additional Educational Learning Opportunities

Interactive, engaging, enjoyable learning experiences that mix fun and learning. Have fun while increasing your Medicare knowledge.

### Medicare BLAST & Medicare ARCADE

Medicare BLAST is published every other Wednesday and can be played on-demand until the Medicare challenge ends that day at 3:00 p.m. ET. Select Leaderboard after you've finished playing to see how well you've performed against your Medicare peers. We post each week's top five winners in this newsletter on the following Monday morning. For optimal experience with the new game, please use either a Chrome or Firefox Internet browser. Medicare BLAST is also available via your mobile phone.



[Medicare ARCADE](#) offers on-demand games to challenge your Medicare knowledge and compete against your peers.

- Text GAMES to 37702 to receive exclusive Medicare BLAST and Medicare ARCADE notifications.



### Stay Informed with Medicare Mobile

Join Medicare Mobile to receive exclusive notifications straight to your phone. Be the first to hear about breaking news, important updates, virtual events, and more. Join today!

- Text NEWS to 37702 to receive exclusive Medicare news notifications.



### LinkedIn

Find educational articles and upcoming educational webinars by connecting with us on LinkedIn.

[www.linkedin.com/company/ngsmedicare](http://www.linkedin.com/company/ngsmedicare)

