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Medicare Skilled Nursing Facility Appeals: **Process Overview**

This handout provides a brief overview of the Medicare skilled nursing facility (SNF) appeals process, including when the Notice of Medicare Non-Coverage (NOMNC) is issued. Medicare beneficiary appeal rights are explained, along with what happens after an appeal is requested and the role of the Beneficiary Family Centered Care Quality Improvement Organization (BFCC-QIO). Finally, key timelines and possible appeal outcomes are highlighted. It is designed to help staff better understand the overall process.

NOMNC is Issued

The NOMNC is given to the Medicare beneficiary (patient) when **all** Medicare-covered skilled services are expected to end. It explains when Medicare coverage is ending, the beneficiary's appeal rights, and how to request an appeal.

What Happens After the NOMNC is Issued?

Medicare beneficiaries or their representatives have the right to request an appeal if they disagree with the decision to end Medicare-covered skilled services. The beneficiary must request the appeal by the deadline listed on the NOMNC, typically by noon the day before Medicare-covered services are scheduled to end.

What Happens After an Appeal is Requested?

1. The provider (facility) is responsible for submitting the medical records for review. Timelines are short. Therefore, timely record submission is very important. Providers will receive a medical request from Acentra Health with detailed instructions.
2. A physician reviewer will review the medical records to determine whether skilled care is still medically necessary.
3. Providers and plans will receive determination letters by fax only.

This handout is part of Acentra Health's **Skilled Nursing Facility Appeals Education Toolkit**. Find related training videos and printable handouts at www.acentraqio.com/providers/snf-appeals-toolkit.

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Role of the BFCC-QIO

Under a contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), BFCC-QIOs work with providers throughout the appeals process to support fair review decisions and consistency of care. When a beneficiary requests an appeal related to Medicare-covered skilled services, the BFCC-QIO reviews the case and medical record.

Acentra Health serves as the BFCC-QIO for 29 states and provides education, tools, and resources to help improve understanding of Medicare processes and requirements.

Key Timelines

The NOMNC must be issued at least 2 calendar days before all Medicare-covered skilled services end. For example, if coverage ends on Friday, the NOMNC should be issued by Wednesday. While the NOMNC can be presented earlier, it should be close enough to discharge that the beneficiary and family understand and remember the information.

- Medical records are often due on the same day or next business day.
  Note: Medical record requests may be received outside of normal business hours.
- Review decisions are completed quickly.

Possible Appeal Outcomes

- Medicare-covered skilled services continue.
- Medicare-covered skilled services end.
- A second-level review (Reconsideration) may be requested by the beneficiary or their representative.

Provider Resources

- **Check appeal status online** on Acentra Health's website, 24/7: www.acentraqio.com/casestatus
- **News and updates regarding appeals** on Acentra Health's website: www.acentraqio.com/providers/appeals
- Latest NOMNC form: https://www.cms.gov/medicare/forms-notices/beneficiary-notices-initiative/ffs-ma-nomnc-denc
- CMS Medicare Benefit Policy Manual, Publication 100-02, Chapter 8 **Coverage of Extended Care (SNF) Services Under Hospital Insurance,** section 30 – Skilled Nursing Facility Level of Care: https://www.cms.gov/regulations-and-guidance/guidance/manuals/downloads/bp102c08pdf.pdf (PDF)
- Contact information for Acentra Health: www.acentraqio.com/contact
- **Keep your facility's contact information updated with Acentra Health** to receive *timely* communications from Acentra Health without unnecessary delays: https://acentraqio.com/providers/updatecontactinfo/
- **Access training and educational materials:** www.acentraqio.com/providers
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  You will receive newsletters and special bulletins with the latest information and updates from Acentra Health and organizations such as CMS.