

TO: ALL PROVIDERS

FROM: CAREFIRST OF MARYLAND INC., MEDICARE PART A

DATE: APRIL 9, 2004

SUBJECT: LOCAL MEDICAL REVIEW POLICIES (LMRPs) CHANGED TO LOCAL COVERAGE DETERMINATIONS (LCDs)

Over the years, providers may have noticed changes in the format for the local medical review policies. Once again there are changes being implemented to the local medical review policies. The final rule published on November 11, 2003 established Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs).

LCDs, established by Section 522 of the Benefits Improvement and Protection Act (BIPA), is a decision by a fiscal intermediary or carrier whether to cover a particular service on an intermediary or carrier –wide basis in accordance with Section 1862 (a) (1) (A) of the Social Security Act. The difference between LMRPs and LCDs is that LCDs consist only of “reasonable and necessary” information, while LMRPs may also contain category or statutory provisions. Any non-reasonable and necessary language a contractor wishes to communicate to providers must be done through an article.

Effective December 7, 2003, CMS contractors will be issuing LCDs instead of LMRPs. Over the next two (2) years, contractors will convert all existing LMRPs into LCDs and articles.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has established a Medicare Coverage database which contains contractor policies, determinations, and articles. Providers may continue to access coverage information on the Maryland Medicare website at [www.marylandmedicare.com](http://www.marylandmedicare.com) or on the CMS Medicare Coverage Homepage <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/coverage/default.asp> and Click on “Search the Database.” Information about National Coverage Determinations (NCDs) is included in the database as well.

Should you have any questions, contact Trish Neal RN, Medical Review Unit at (410)561-4041 or [patricia.neal@carefirst.com](mailto:patricia.neal@carefirst.com).

**THIS BULLETIN SHOULD BE SHARED WITH ALL HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONERS AND MANAGERIAL MEMBERS OF THE PROVIDER/SUPPLIER STAFF. BULLETINS ISSUED AFTER OCTOBER 1,1999 ARE AVAILBABLE AT NO-COST FROM OUR WEBSITE AT [www.marylandmedicare.com](http://www.marylandmedicare.com)**