RX FAX

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Pharmacy Facts

MassHealth Pharmacy Program
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Important Tamper Resistant Prescription Update

Correction to All Provider Bulletin 167

In All Provider Bulletin 167 (September 2007), Mass-Health listed **sequentially numbered or duplicate blanks** as a feature that met "industry standards" to prevent the use of counterfeit prescription forms. MassHealth has learned that some hospital providers are using these features on their computer-generated prescription paper, which in some cases may be linked to an electronic medical record (EMR).

According to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), sequentially numbered or duplicate prescription blanks, in and of themselves, do not meet the standard for tamper resistance. That feature is only acceptable if the number is authenticated through the use of a central registry that is reported to, or maintained by, the state (such as in New York State). Massachusetts does not maintain such a registry, and we are taking steps to alert hospital-based prescribers to the CMS directive.

If a noncompliant prescription is received, please contact the prescriber to verify the prescription. Recording the authentication in writing on the back of the prescription will meet the tamper-resistant requirements. MassHealth appreciates the pharmacist's cooperation in helping members obtain medically necessary drugs without delay.

Information about Computer Generated Prescriptions:

CMS recently provided updated information that may be of value to health facilities or others using computer-generated prescriptions at http://www.cms.hhs.gov/DeficitReductionAct/Downloads/TamperUpdate.pdf

Following a recent discussion with CMS, MassHealth has approved the following features to satisfy the April 1st deadline for a single characteristic tamper-resistant prescription requirement.

Feature	Description
Quantity check-off boxes	In addition to the written quantity on the prescription, quantities are indicated in ranges, ideally in groups of 25, with the highest being "151 and over." The range box corresponding to the quantity prescribed must be checked for the prescription to be valid.
Quantity Border and Fill (for computer-generated prescriptions on paper only)	Quantities are surrounded by special characters, such as an asterisk, to prevent alteration (e.g. QTY **50**). Values may also be expressed as text, e.g. (FIFTY).
Refill Border and Fill (for computer generated prescriptions on paper only)	Refill quantities are surrounded by special characters, such as an asterisk, to prevent alteration (e.g. QTY **5**). Values may also be expressed as text, e.g. (FIVE).

MassHealth continues to recommend the preferred features previously published to comply with all three characteristics by the October 1, 2008, deadline as described in Pharmacy Facts #34, dated March 21, 2008, at www.masshealth.gov/masshealth/pharmacy.

Please direct any questions or comments (or to be taken off of this fax distribution) to
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