

New Medicare Number FAQ

Q. What does MBI stand for when referring to Medicare?

A. MBI is Medicare Beneficiary Identifier and will replace the SSN-based Health Insurance Claim Number (HICN) for new Medicare cards.

Q. When will Medicare issue the new MBI to members?

A. Medicare will begin mailing new cards in April 2018 and will continue replacing all Medicare cards by the statutory deadline of April 2019. See New Medicare Card Mailing Rollout Strategy. See [New Medicare Card Mailing Rollout Strategy](#).

Q. If a patient has been issued a MBI, but a claim is billed with the old HICN number, will the claim reject?

A. No. There is a transition period beginning April 1, 2018 through December 31, 2019 in which you can use either the HICN or the MBI to exchange data and information with Medicare.

Q. Will the new MBI look like the HICN?

A. No. The MBI and HICN are clearly different even though they are both 11 characters in length. The MBI's characters 1, 4, 7, 10, and 11 will always be a number, characters 2nd, 5th, 8th, and 9th characters will always be a letter and 3rd and 6th characters will be a letter or a number.

Q. Can the HICN number be used to request eligibility on a patient who has been issued a new MBI through the HIPAA Eligibility Transaction System (HETS)?

A. Yes. A HICN number can be used during the transition period (April 2018 thru December 2019). If a HICN is used to check eligibility and the patient has been issued a new MBI, CMS will return the following message on the 271 (Loop 2110C, Segment MSG) eligibility response, "CMS mailed a Medicare card with a new Medicare Beneficiary Identifier (MBI) to this beneficiary. Medicare providers, please get the new MBI from your patient and save it in your system(s)."

Q. If a HICN is used on a claim for a patient that has been issued an MBI, will CMS return the new MBI on the 835 Remittance Advice?

A. If a HICN is billed on a claim for a patient who has been issued a new MBI, the HICN will be returned on the 835. However, effective October 2018, the new MBI will also be returned on the 835 in Loop 2100, Segment NM1 (Corrected Patient/Insured Name), Field NM109 (Identification Code).

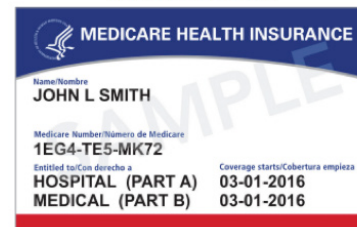
Q. If both the HICN and the new MBI are returned in the 835 file, will both be displayed on the electronic remittance advice?

A. Yes. Effective October 1, 2018 through the transition period, if a HICN and MBI are returned in the 835 file, two MID fields will display on the ERA. The first MID will display the Medicare ID submitted on the claim. The second MID field will display the MBI.

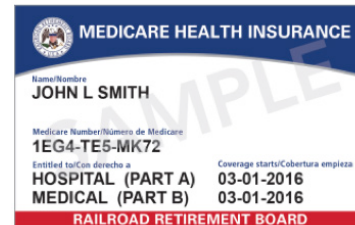
Q. Can a provider identify if patient is a "Railroad Retirement Board" member by the MBI?

A. No. The MBI format is the same for all Medicare beneficiaries. The provider can identify the RRB members by the logo on the Medicare Card, however, cannot tell from looking at the MBI. Beginning in April 2018, CMS will return a message on the eligibility transaction response (271- Loop 2110C, Segment MSG) for RRB patients. The message will say, "Railroad Retirement Medicare Beneficiary."

New Medicare Card



RRB Issued Medicare Card



Courtesy of CMS MLN Fact Sheet Transition to Medicare Numbers and Cards February 2018

Q. Is there a way for a provider to look up a patient's MBI number?

A. Yes. Beginning June 2018, a provider MBI look-up tool will be available through a secure web interface located on your MAC's provider portal.

Q. How will Medicaid and supplemental insurers Crossover claims be affected?

A. CMS will provide State Medicaid Agencies and supplemental insurers the MBIs for Medicaid-eligible people who also have Medicare before the new Medicare cards are mailed. During the transition period, CMS will process and transmit Medicare crossover claims with either the HICN or MBI.

More information is available at <https://www.cms.gov/medicare/new-medicare-card/nmc-home.html>.