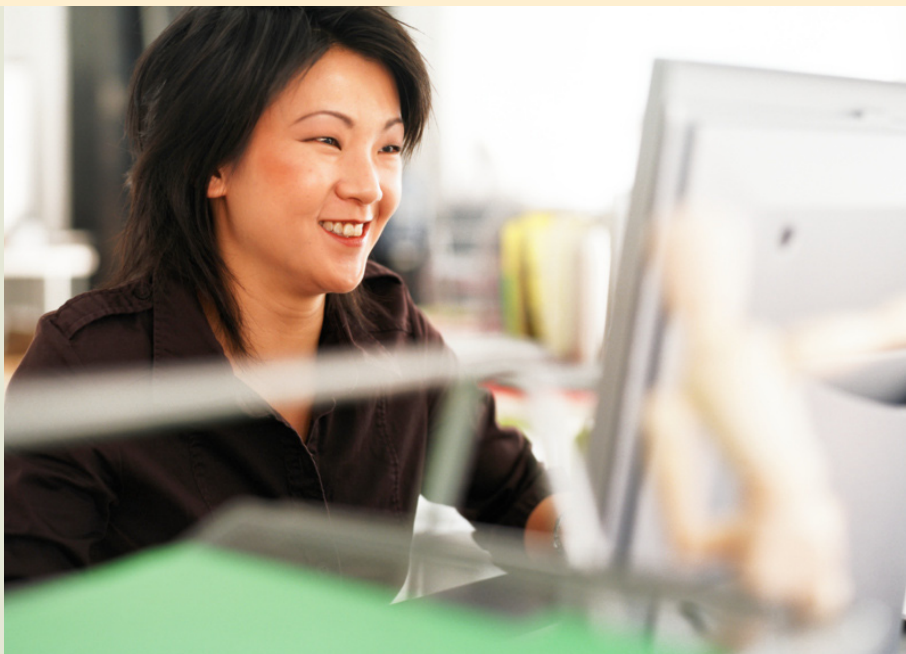


# insider

A KEPRO QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER • VIRGINIA MEDICAID PRIOR AUTHORIZATION • SPRING 2007



## Virginia Healthcare Providers Use iEXCHANGE® for Easy Prior Authorization

The Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) in partnership with KePRO uses a secure, HIPAA-compliant, web-based prior authorization processing system called iEXCHANGE®. This user-friendly system reduces paperwork by providing access to submit requests 24 hours a day, seven days a week via the Internet.

iEXCHANGE® features include the following:

- Data entry validation to minimize errors, thereby reducing the number of requests pending approval.
- Convenient ASP (Application Service Provider) mechanism in a Web page, which is designed and supported by MEDecision.
- Confidentiality mechanisms, in-

cluding 128-bit encryption and support for Digital Certificates.

- Blocking mechanism to prevent Internet transmission of confidential data when requested by a member.
- Integrated care management through automatic linkage to MEDecision's case, disease and utilization management software suite.

Recently, INSIDER contacted some iEXCHANGE® users to gauge their experience with the program. Here is what they had to say:

**TERRI A. TUCK, PRESIDENT  
HEALTHCARE ADMINISTRATIVE  
SERVICES, BEDFORD**

"iEXCHANGE® is much faster than faxing," said Tuck. "You can check pending files on iEXCHANGE® and if you need to provide more information, the file will be flagged. You can go in and enter the additional information in iEXCHANGE® right there without waiting. With the fax-in method, it hangs out there for a long time before you know there's a problem."

Tuck notes that iEXCHANGE® is ac-

### in this edition

Web-Based iExchange® Makes Medicaid Prior Authorization Process Quick and Easy in Virginia

NPI: Get It. Share It. Use It.

cessible 24/7, which fits her schedule better than systems based on fixed hours. “I feel like I’m in constant communication with KePRO,” she adds.

The ease of communication has added benefits. Healthcare Administrative Services finds that 95 to 98 percent of its psych services are approved on the first go-round. This is a far more consistent approval rate than during the pre-iEXCHANGE® days.

Tuck recommends that individuals become familiar with the data requirements and prepare themselves before they sit down with iEXCHANGE®. “I’ve done iEXCHANGE® training and made cheat sheets,” said Tuck. “Training with 40 plus people never takes more than two hours. If you’re sitting down one-on-one, training takes 30 minutes or less.”

Terri A. Tuck has been administering prior authorizations for 75 providers on iEXCHANGE® since it became available last year.

#### THE TOP FIVE REASONS PEOPLE USE iEXCHANGE®:

1. **Get approval in days, not weeks.** All of the people we interviewed experienced a faster and more efficient authorization process with iEXCHANGE®.
2. **No more paper forms.** KePRO faxes authorizations to iEXCHANGE® clients, but the system is almost completely paperless.
3. **It’s not hard to learn.** Familiarize yourself with the data requirements before you sit down and use the system. Then try it. If you have questions, call KePRO or an experienced iEXCHANGE® user.
4. **You have 24/7 access to your prior-authorization-related information.** If a file is pending, you can see it on iEXCHANGE®. You can also enter the additional information right into the system.

#### KIM FOLDEN, MSW, LCSW, ROANOKE/LYNCHBURG UNIT DIRECTOR/THERAPIST | BRALEY & THOMPSON, INC., ROANOKE

“I am trying to train all my case managers to use iEXCHANGE®,” said Folden. “I find it very easy to navigate looking for the status of prior authorizations.”

“Using iEXCHANGE® is fast. Whereas approvals took weeks in the past, iEXCHANGE® took only 48 hours. I was a little intimidated at first, but once I taught myself how to navigate through it, it was extremely simple. People should just try it and call KePRO if they have any questions.”

“It took a brand new case manager 10 minutes to send a PA for the first time,” she said. “And next time it shouldn’t even take that long.”

#### AMY ISAKSON, MARKETING/BUSINESS OPERATIONS MANAGER | UVA IMAGING AT FONTAINE, CHARLOTTESVILLE

At UVA Imaging, 10 prior authorization and two billing staff use the system.

“The feedback has been very positive from my staff and I haven’t heard of any difficulties in using iEXCHANGE®,” said Isakson.

#### MARY S. DIAS, DIRECTOR, REVENUE OUTCOMES/ANALYSIS | INOVA HEALTH SYSTEM, FAIRFAX

iEXCHANGE® provides confirmation that data have been submitted and helps Inova Health System meet its timeliness requirements. “We cut our prior authorization approval time from two weeks to 48 hours,” said Dias.

“It’s easy to navigate after basic training. Anyone who uses a computer can use it.” Inova Health System has established a paperless system using iEXCHANGE® to track and file cases. They simply document the case ID and look at the time stamp on the approval for reference.

Dias recommends, “Do the upfront work and it’s smooth sailing from there!”

# NPI: Get It. Share It. Use It.

Do you have a National Provider Identifier (NPI) number yet? This number will eventually replace your “legacy” Medicare/Medicaid provider number. The original compliance date mandated by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services was May 23, 2007. An extension has been released. However, KePRO and the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) encourage providers to obtain an NPI as soon as possible and begin using it to submit requests for prior-authorization. Failure to prepare could result in a disruption in cash flow. Will you be ready to use your NPI? Time is running out!

## UPDATING NATIONAL PLAN AND PROVIDER ENUMERATION SYSTEM (NPPES) INFORMATION

All healthcare providers should include their legacy identifiers as well as associated provider identifier type(s) on their NPI applications. If a provider has already completed an application and did not submit a legacy identifier, this provider should go back and update its information in NPPES on the Web site at <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov>. While doing so, providers should also validate other data in NPPES, such as address, contact person information, etc. and update anything that has changed.

## SHARING YOUR NPI

Once providers have received their NPIs, they should share them with other providers with whom they do business and with health plans that request their NPIs. In fact, as outlined in current regulation, providers must share their NPI with any entity that may need it for billing purposes—including those who need it for designation of ordering or referring physician. Providers should also consider letting health plans, or institutions for whom they work, share their NPIs for them.

## NEW FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS) POSTED

CMS has posted new NPI FAQs on its Web site. Questions include:

- For Medicare provider enrollment purposes, will group practices need to submit new CMS-855Rs for every member of the group practice in order to let Medicare know their NPIs?
- Will health plans link the NPIs of group practices to the NPIs of the health care providers who are members of the group practices?
- Who needs an NPI? Who is not eligible to apply for an NPI? What if I have a Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) number? What if I only bill on paper? What if I do not submit claims to Medicare?
- Can my office Employer Identification Number (EIN) be used instead of a National Provider Identifier (NPI)?
- When do I need to use my National Provider Identifier (NPI)?
- Is a corporation that owns pharmacies that have National Provider Identifiers (NPIs) required to have an NPI in order to receive payments on behalf of the owned pharmacies?

To view these FAQs, please go to the CMS dedicated NPI Web site at [www.cms.hhs.gov/NationalProviderIdentifierStandards](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/NationalProviderIdentifierStandards) and click on Educational Resources. Scroll down to the section that says “Related Links Inside CMS” and click on Frequently Asked Questions. To find the latest FAQs, click on the arrows next to “Date Updated.”

To apply for or update your NPI, please visit <http://nppes.cms.hhs.gov>. Please visit <https://dmas.kepro.org> and click on the red “NPI Help” link to see the changes to our systems and how they affect your organization.





**Innovative Healthcare Management Solutions**

2810 North Parham Road, Suite 305

Richmond, VA 23294

Toll-free: 888.827.2884

Tel: 804.622.8900

Fax: 877.652.9329