



An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and
Blue Shield Association

April 30, 2015

Linda Frederiksen
Iowa EMS Association
5550 Wild Rose Lane Ste 400
West Des Moines, IA 50266

Dear Ms. Frederiksen,

This letter is to inform you of a change in air ambulance claims filing rules which may impact your membership. These changes do not apply to claims submitted for Federal Employee Program (FEP) members and hospital-based air ambulance providers who bill UB-04 claims using their hospital's NPI.

Effective for dates of service on and after April 19, 2015, the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association modified billing guidelines for non-hospital based air ambulance providers. Non-hospital based air ambulance providers must now submit claims to the Blue Plan where the patient was picked up. The previous billing guidelines required claims to be submitted to the Plan where the air ambulance provider is located or headquartered.

Air ambulance providers must submit the zip code of where the patient was picked up. Wellmark is updating our claims processing systems to look for and verify the pick-up zip code submitted on the claim is located within Iowa or South Dakota. The specific claim form field information can be found in the General Medical section of the Provider Guide on Wellmark.com/Provider.

Claims Filing Example

If an Iowa based air ambulance provider picked up a patient outside of Iowa or South Dakota, that air ambulance provider will need to submit the claim to the Blue Plan where the patient pick-up occurred. The claim will be processed by that Blue Plan according to any contracting and reimbursement arrangement that air ambulance provider has with that Blue Plan. The provider agreement you hold with Wellmark does not apply to claims for patient's picked-up outside of Iowa or South Dakota. Wellmark will provide member benefits to the Blue Plan so correct benefits will be applied to the claim.

Action Needed

Some Blue Plans may require the air ambulance provider to complete their own application process which could extend the time before a claim can be processed and paid. Each Blue Plan has its own rules and requirements regarding the application and contracting process. If an air ambulance provider does pick-up outside of Iowa or South Dakota, I recommend that you contact the Blue Plan in that state regarding their provider application and contracting process.

If you or your membership have questions, please email NetworkAdministrationOps@wellmark.com.

Sincerely,

Mike Fay

Mike Fay

Vice President, Health Networks