

Quick Points



April 27, 2009

Verifying patient eligibility

Effective January 15, 2009, Minnesota Statute 62J.536 required health care providers and group purchasers (payers, plans) to exchange eligibility electronically using a standard format. The intent of the law is to reduce costs, simplify and speed up health care transactions, and give providers and health plans one set of rules to follow for electronic transactions. This statute applies to all health care providers that request benefit or eligibility information regardless of participating status.

Rules for checking eligibility and benefits

According to the Minnesota Department of Health, the compliant modes for initial eligibility inquiries and responses are either via provider web self-service (PWSS) or submission of the *Eligibility Inquiry and Response Electronic Transaction* (ANSI ASC X12 270/271). Utilization of the Integrated Voice Response system (IVR) is not considered compliant for this initial exchange. If, after an initial compliant exchange (via web or EDI), additional information or review is needed, other modes that are available may be used, including IVR or a phone call to a service representative.

The Minnesota Administrative Uniformity Committee (AUC) has published a best practice related to checking eligibility and benefits for patients. The best practice covers 4 major areas:

- When and how to verify
- Preferred methods of eligibility inquiry
- Sharing eligibility information
- Data elements that should be used to update information systems

The recommendation of the AUC is that eligibility be checked for each patient once per calendar month since most eligibility changes occur at the beginning of a month. Please refer to the best practice at the following link for other helpful tips.

www.health.state.mn.us/auc/bstprac01.pdf

Questions?

If you want to register to receive the electronic eligibility (270/271) transaction, contact ClearConnect Sales and Marketing at **(651) 662-5742**, option 2 or toll free at **1-866-251-6742**, option 2; or use the registration form found on the website at www.clearconnect.com.

You can also use the provider web self-service site to check eligibility and benefits. To apply, go to the Welcome page on www.providerhub.com. Click on the link “Want access to this online service for your office?”