



CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES

DATE: December 1, 2023

TO: All Current and Prospective Medicare Advantage, Prescription Drug Plan, Section 1876 Cost, PACE, and Medicare-Medicaid Plan Organizations

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SUBJECT: Updates and Timeline for the Contract Year 2025 Plan Benefit Package

We would like to express our appreciation for your partnership throughout the implementation of the Plan Benefit Package (PBP) redesign. Your ongoing support and feedback has been integral to the development of the Contract Year (CY) 2025 module and application programming interface (API).

This memo provides a preview of key PBP changes and a high-level timeline of the events for CY 2025. CMS will deliver additional guidance over the coming months in preparation for the PBP production release.

Upcoming PBP Changes

Medicare Advantage

- Benefit Details
 - For Dental (16), all Medicare covered dental services will move to a redefined parent-level category for Medicare-covered Dental Services; all non-Medicare covered dental service sub-categories and questions will be reorganized/renumbered to better align with Current Dental Terminology (CDT) Code categories.
 - For Hearing Aids, the service categories and questions will allow separate cost sharing for Prescription (18b) and Over-the-Counter (OTC) Hearing Aids (18c).
 - When adding a benefit to an Out-of-Network (OON) or Point-of-Service (POS) cost share group, the PBP will allow benefits to be added at the more granular child benefit level.

- Plan Level Cost Sharing
 - For PPO plans, the PBP will require the OON Maximum Out-of-Pocket (MOOP) limit to be less than or equal to the Combined MOOP when it includes only Medicare covered benefits.

- VBID
 - For VBID Part C, the option to select “Medicare Advantage rewards and incentives” (and related questions and screens) will be removed.
 - The VBID Wellness and Healthcare Planning questions, screens, and related text will be removed.
 - An option to select “Area Deprivation Index” will be added to the Targeting Methodology for VBID Packages.
 - The VBID Health Equity Program questions, screens, and related text will be removed.

- Rx (Part D)
 - The coverage gap functionality will be removed.
 - References to the Initial Coverage Limit (ICL) will be removed. The PBP will now reference the Initial Coverage Phase (ICP).
 - These coverage gap and ICP changes will be reflected in the Rx VBID section.
 - A free text box will be added for enhanced plans that select “Reduced Initial Coverage Phase cost shares.” The intent is for sponsors to describe how they are fulfilling the requirement to increase the actuarial value of benefits above the actuarial value of defined standard prescription drug coverage.
 - The data entry in the catastrophic coverage phase will be changed to refer only to excluded drugs.

- Reports
 - There will be a new **PBP Notes report** that will include all notes entered into the PBP.
 - There will be a new **PBP Version report** where users can view previously submitted versions of the PBP.

- Copy Function
 - The copy user interface will be redesigned to improve the presentation of the destination plan selection.

- To ensure that benefit packages are reviewed post copy, all PBP sections will be marked as “in progress” in the destination plan.
- The year-to-year copy feature will be disabled for the Dental benefit due its redesign in the CY 2025 PBP. Plans will still be able to copy the Dental benefit between CY 2025 plans.

CMS will be making several changes to the overall bid submission process to address problems encountered by plans over the course of the CY 2024 season. CMS will communicate those changes to plans and consultants under separate cover.

CY 2025 PBP Schedule

The table below provides a high-level timeline for CY 2025 PBP-related activities.

Date	Event
December 1, 2023	Release of draft API/JSON structures for CY 2025.
December 19, 2023	Release of final API/JSON structures for CY 2025.
January 8, 2024	Industry PBP API testing begins for CY 2025.
January 8, 2024	Plan preview of the CY 2025 PBP module in the sandbox.
February 5 - 23, 2024	Plan testing of the CY 2025 PBP module in the sandbox.
April 5, 2024	Release of the CY 2025 PBP in production.

Draft CY 2025 PBP API/JSON Structures

The draft CY 2025 PBP API/JSON documentation is available in the **Documentation** section of the publicly-available HPMS landing page (<https://hpms.cms.gov>). Please direct questions about the PBP API to hpmstechsupport@softrams.com.

For questions regarding this memo, please contact the HPMS Help Desk at either hpms@cms.hhs.gov or 1-800-220-2028.