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AMA AND MGMA PARTNER TO HELP MEMBERS WITH MEDICARE ENROLLMENT

WASHINGTON, D.C. – To help physician practices navigate the new requirements of the Medicare enrollment process, the American Medical Association (AMA) and the Medical Group Management Association (MGMA) partnered to develop a new online toolkit, available today. Free to members of AMA and MGMA, the toolkit is accessible online at AMA and MGMA’s Web sites.

“This new online toolkit outlines pitfalls and provides information on how to quickly and easily navigate the complicated enrollment process,” said AMA Board Chair Joseph Heyman, M.D. “We are pleased to partner with MGMA to provide our members with much needed help on the Medicare enrollment process.”

Many of the most drastic changes to Medicare’s enrollment process were implemented April 1. The toolkit aims to make the process easier by outlining the new policies in an easy to understand format. The goal is to help physicians successfully enroll as quickly as possible without interruptions to patient care or Medicare reimbursements.

“We anticipate that this new toolkit will be an essential desk reference for practice staff,” said MGMA President and CEO William F. Jessee, M.D, FACMPE.

Physicians should be aware of two key changes in the enrollment process that could have a negative impact on patient access to care and Medicare reimbursement.

- Physicians now have only 30 days to make changes to their enrollment information, such as a new practice address, and their enrollment status could be revoked if they do not comply with the timeframe.
- Assuming physicians have met all the Medicare enrollment requirements, they will only be able to bill Medicare retroactively for 30 days once they are successfully enrolled, rather than up to 27 months as was previously permitted.

“Many of the changes to Medicare’s enrollment process are cause for concern, and we are working to improve the process so physicians can enroll without disruption to their practice,” said Dr. Heyman.

The AMA and MGMA are very pleased that Medicare has now unveiled a process for submitting applications online. This is expected to make the application process much faster, but the process for staff use is still cumbersome and needs improvement.

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“MGMA and AMA have worked closely with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to improve the enrollment process, and while the new online system is improved there are still trouble spots that could hamper a physician practice trying to enroll,” said Dr. Jessee.

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More information on the enrollment process is available to all physicians and practice staff at <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/no-index/legislation-advocacy/medicare-enrollment-process.shtml> and at <http://www.mgma.com/policy/default.aspx?id=5712>.

The toolkit is available to AMA members at www.ama-assn.org/go/medicare-enrollment-kit and to MGMA members at www.mgma.com/enrollmenttoolkit.

For a copy of the toolkit or more information contact:

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About the American Medical Association

The American Medical Association helps doctors help patients by uniting physicians nationwide to work on the most important professional and public health issues. Working together, the AMA's quarter of a million physician and medical student members are playing an active role in shaping the future of medicine. For more information on the AMA, please visit www.ama-assn.org.

About the Medical Group Management Association

MGMA is the premier membership association for professional administrators and leaders of medical group practices. Since 1926, MGMA has delivered networking, professional education and resources, and political advocacy for medical practice management. Today, MGMA's 22,500 members lead 13,700 organizations nationwide in which some 275,000 physicians provide more than 40 percent of the health care services delivered in the United States.

MGMA's mission is to continually improve the performance of medical group practice professionals and the organizations they represent. MGMA promotes the group practice model as the optimal framework for health care delivery, assisting group practices in providing efficient, safe, patient-focused and affordable care. MGMA is headquartered in Englewood, Colo., and maintains a government affairs office in Washington, D.C. Please visit mgma.com.