

Important Reminder: CMS Requires Providers and Suppliers To Retain Medicare Advantage Patient Records for 10 Years

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) requires Medicare Advantage providers and suppliers to retain medical records and other documents on their patients for 10 years plus the contract year.

This applies to providers and suppliers who serve our beneficiaries in BlueMedicareSM HMO and BlueMedicare PPO plans. The requirement includes all contracted physicians, non-physician practitioners, suppliers and facilities submitting claims to Medicare contractors.

A CMS audit for Risk Adjustment Data Validation can require records for the last six years. A Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS[®]) review can require records from 10 years ago.

According to CMS, providers/suppliers should maintain a medical record for each Medicare Advantage member who is their patient. These medical records must be accurately written, promptly completed, accessible, properly filed and retained.

CMS has not set requirements for the media formats for medical records. However, the medical record should be in its original form or in a legally reproduced form, which may be electronic so medical records may be reviewed and audited by authorized entities. Providers must have a medical record system that ensures the record may be accessed and retrieved promptly.

You can learn more about these requirements [here](#).