



SEP 15 2018

Dear Tribal Leader and Urban Indian Organization Leader:

I am writing to update you on the progress of efforts to clarify Indian Health Service (IHS) and Tribal pharmacy claim rejections with Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM) CVS/Caremark (CVSC). I am pleased to announce new information regarding this issue.

Last year, the IHS worked with CVSC to establish two pilot sites, one IHS pharmacy (Phoenix Indian Medical Center) and one Tribal pharmacy (Chickasaw Nation), to test a process by which previously rejected claims would be reviewed by CVSC. In April 2018, CVSC set up an e-mail address for IHS, Tribal, and Urban Indian Organization (I/T/U) pharmacy staff to transmit rejected claims, so that CVSC experts could troubleshoot and identify system issues that were causing these claims to be rejected. As a result of pilot site participation and e-mail submissions received, CVSC was able to determine a work-around to allow I/T/U claims to be paid.

Reprocessing of the claims identified to date is currently underway in the CVSC test system. This testing will remain in effect for 3 to 4 more weeks. CVSC is also working on amending the logic underlying I/T/U claims payment and changes that will classify I/T/U National Provider Identifiers as “specialty pharmacy” providers, which will also help prevent improper denials of I/T/U pharmacy claims in the future. We anticipate that this process will be complete by the end of September 2018.

Thank you for support and partnership in addressing this important issue. We will provide additional updates as new information becomes available.

Sincerely,

/Michael D. Weahkee/

RADM Michael D. Weahkee, MBA, MHSA
Assistant Surgeon General, U.S. Public Health Service
Acting Director