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*Deputy Administrator*

Washington, DC 20201

William W. Stead, M.D.  
Chairperson, National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
National Center for Health Statistics  
3311 Toledo Road, Room 2402  
Hyattsville, MD 20782

Dear Dr. Stead:

Thank you for your letter regarding the findings and recommendations from the National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics' (NCVHS) Standards Subcommittee Hearing on the Health Plan Identifier (HPID). We appreciate the NCVHS's crucial role in supporting administrative efficiency across the healthcare industry, and are committed to adopting transaction standards with a focus on increasing efficiency and minimizing burden.

We have reviewed the findings in your letter carefully, and are pleased to inform the Committee that we have begun to address the recommendations below:

**Recommendation 1:** HHS should rescind its September 5, 2012 HPID final rule which required health plans to obtain and use the HPID.

Response: We are exploring the regulatory avenues available to address the concerns you received from industry regarding the HPID policy.

**Recommendation 2:** HHS should communicate its intent to rescind the HPID final rule to all affected industry stakeholders as soon as a decision is made. HHS should provide the applicable guidance on the effect a rescission may have on all parties involved.

Response: We will utilize the Unified Agenda of Federal Regulatory and Deregulatory Actions to communicate intended regulatory actions. We agree that communication to affected stakeholders is critical and we will ensure that our education and outreach is appropriate, timely, and in compliance with the Administrative Procedure Act.

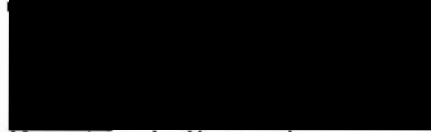
**Recommendation 3:** HHS should continue the 2014 HPID Enforcement Discretion until publication of the regulation rescinding the September 5, 2012 HPID Final Rule.

Response: We agree with your recommendation to continue the enforcement discretion until we finalize a new HPID policy through rulemaking, which would ensure that no entities are penalized for failing to obtain or use an HPID.

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In closing, we would like to thank you for your service as Chair of the NCVHS. We value the insights and recommendations from the NCVHS and look forward to the committee's continued advice on key health data issues.

Sincerely,



Demetrios L. Kouzoukas  
Principal Deputy Administrator and  
Director, Center for Medicare