



Benefits of Electronic Document Requests (eMDR)

Summary

Review Contractors issue an estimated 2 million requests each year to healthcare providers for medical documentation and records, according to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Most often, these requests are fulfilled through manual processes, requiring the Review Contractor to mail the request for documents, and the provider to print out medical records, compile documentation and submit back to the contractor by mail or fax. This process can be expensive, cumbersome and risks human error at each step.

A project developed by CMS called the Electronic Submission of Medical Documentation (esMD) provides an automated mechanism for managing the claims request and submission process through secure electronic communication between contractors and providers. The esMD program allows providers who either are or contract with Health Information Handlers (HIHs) to receive document requests and submit required medical records and associated documentation electronically during the claims review process. Discussion Letters, as well as Level 1 and Level 2 Appeals, can also be submitted electronically.

Phase 1 of the esMD program launched in September 2011, enabling providers to respond to Additional Documentation Request (ADR) letters and contractors to receive the requested medical documentation electronically. Phase 2 of the esMD program went live in March of 2020, debuting new features that enable bidirectional communication between providers and review contractors. Bluemark refers to the combined Phase 1 and Phase 2 process as “Full Cycle” esMD.

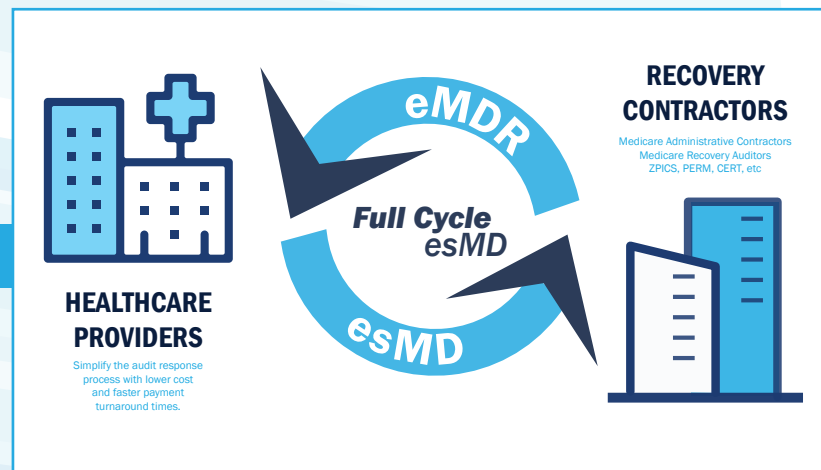
The esMD program can reduce the overall time for response activities by several days and provides tremendous value to the provider community through:

- Overall process efficiencies
- Improved accuracy
- Reduced administrative burden and cost
- Significantly expedited claims review process

Key Features of the esMD Program

Since the launch of Phase 1, the esMD program has consistently expanded to include new features and functionality. The program started with the electronic submission of medical records and documentation and with Phase 2, it introduces new electronic

communication features that further streamline the claims review process. These new features allow review contractors to send electronic documentation requests (eMDRs) and other forms of communication to providers, establishing the structure for an almost completely paperless audit response process.



Benefits of eMDR

Eliminating traditional methods of document receipt and submission dramatically shortens the time it takes to respond to audit requests, which can lead to faster decisions by auditors, accelerated appeals and faster payment adjustments.

To best understand the impact provided by the new Phase 2 functionality, the eMDR transaction, let's start out by reviewing today's typical process for the provider. The details of this part of the process can differ from provider to provider. Here we are outlining the typical steps an ADR will go through to begin the audit response process.

1. Audit is initiated by the contractor, and the audit document request letter is mailed to the provider.
2. ADR Letter navigates through the U.S. Postal Service and gets to the providers facility in two to three business days.
3. The ADR letter moves through an internal mail process to reach the appropriate audit management resource.
4. Staff reads letter and accesses the audit tracking tool or spreadsheet to initiate the response process.
5. ADR Letter is scanned into tracking tool or saved electronically.
6. Data elements for requested claims are entered into tracking tool or spreadsheet.

Phase 2 of esMD will significantly improve the amount of labor and time providers invest in managing this process. The electronic receipt and notification of the eMDR requests has two components that will vastly improve the manual process

1. Receipt of ADR letters from auditors will be electronic as opposed to a manual letter sent via mail.
2. Combined with a sophisticated audit management solution, data elements and the actual ADR letter automatically arrive in your tracking system with little intervention.

When you compare the current process with the anticipated new process, the amount of administrative time and effort required will be significantly reduced. Through the use of eMDR, the time between ADR letter generation and days to initiate the response will be reduced to essentially zero. This savings is meaningful, as the manual process outlined typically can take up to 5 days to start the response process. When dealing with time-sensitive deadlines, this loss of time can be significant.

Success through esMD

Implementing a tool that will support your integration with esMD can help control costs while providing a fast, secure and transparent submission process. Selecting the right solution to complement your organization's processes and systems is paramount to successful audit management and response.

With the right support, providers can obtain access to the esMD gateway, start using the program—and begin realizing significant enhancements in their overall audit management processes.

Contact Us

1-877-BLUEMARK

www.bluemark.net

