

May 16, 2008

**MAINTAINING BILLABLE PROVIDER CREDENTIAL INFORMATION IN THE
VETERAN HEALTH INFORMATION SYSTEM AND TECHNOLOGY
ARCHITECTURE (VISTA) NEW PERSON FILE**

1. PURPOSE: This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive defines policy requiring procedures for validating and maintaining standardized credentials of billable clinical providers in each Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facility's New Person File within the Veterans Health Information System and Technology Architecture (Vista).

2. BACKGROUND

a. Health care billing standards established by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) (formerly the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA)), and other industry health care payers, require VHA to adopt industry standard procedures for ensuring that correct information is submitted when billing third-party payers.

b. Integrated Billing Software will import the credentials of providers directly onto the standard universal billing forms. Accurate and properly formatted credentials data is required in the Degree Field of the Vista New Person File to enable the software to function appropriately.

c. **Definitions**

(1) Billable Providers. For the purposes of this Directive, Billable Providers are defined by third-party payers as providers for which a separate professional charge can be billed and reimbursed.

(2) Credentials. For the purposes of this Directive, the term credentials includes information on the billable provider's degree, licensure, certification, registration, or occupational information. The DEGREE field in the Vista New Person File is the official electronic repository of the necessary provider credentials (licensure or degree), which is limited to three characters by a legislated national standard for health care electronic data interchange (EDI) billing.

3. POLICY: It is VHA policy that VHA facilities establish procedures for validating and maintaining valid, standardized credentials of billable clinical providers in each VA facility's New Person File within Vista, and that claims submitted to third-party payers comply with established CMS and industry standards for provider credential information.

4. ACTION: The medical center director is responsible for ensuring:

a. That a local cross-functional process is established between the offices of Human Resources, Revenue, Information and the staff responsible for credentialing to:

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(1) Validate credentials of billable providers, and

(2) Ensure that the credentials (degree or licensure) of billable providers are updated and stored in the DEGREE field in the VistA New Person File according to attached VHA standardized list and approved formats. ***NOTE:** Every effort to comply with definitions on credentials, education and licensures from CMS, formerly HCFA, needs to be made before entering data in the New Person File. This helps to ensure that services are appropriately provided and billed.*

b. That an accurate list of the names and their associated credentials (licensure or degree) of all billable providers is developed and data maintained in the New Person File of VistA. This enables VA staff and insurance companies to validate that the services reported are performed by authorized providers.

***NOTE:** Attachments A and B provide additional detail to assist local VA medical center staff.*

5. REFERENCE: None.

6. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY: The VHA Business Office (161) is responsible for the contents of this directive. The telephone number is (202) 254-0339.

7. RESCISSIONS: VHA Directive 2002-056 is rescinded. This VHA Directive expires May 31, 2013.

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ATTACHMENT A

LIST OF PROVIDERS

The following action is required.

1. To populate the DEGREE field. To populate the DEGREE field of the New Person File, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical center staff must determine which practitioner's credentials or degree needs to be verified. A list of current providers can be printed using the *Fileman* routine from the New Person File. After generating a list for each specific classification, the DEGREE field of the New Person File must be populated with the credentials listed in Attachment B, VHA Standardized Credentials and Degrees for Billing.

2. To print the list:

Fileman Routine For Person Class within New Person File
Version Released in May 2000

Enter either 'Y' or 'N'.

OUTPUT FROM WHAT FILE: NEW PERSON//
SORT BY: NAME//PERSON CLASS// (multiple)
PERSON CLASS SUB-FIELD: Person Class//
START WITH Person Class: FIRST// Phy(Case Sensitive) See Note 1
GO TO Person Class: LAST// Phz(Case Sensitive) See Note 1
WITHIN Person Class, SORT BY: PERSON CLASS// (multiple)
PERSON CLASS SUB-FIELD: @Expiration Date// (Case Sensitive)
START WITH Expiration Date: FIRST// @
GO TO Expiration Date: LAST// @
WITHIN Expiration Date, SORT BY: PERSON CLASS// (multiple)
PERSON CLASS SUB-FIELD: Person Class//
PERSON CLASS FIELD: AREA OF SPECIALIZATION
START WITH AREA OF SPECIALIZATION: FIRST// Anes(Case Sensitive) See Note 1
GO TO AREA OF SPECIALIZATION: LAST// Anez(Case Sensitive) See Note 1
WITHIN AREA OF SPECIALIZATION, SORT BY:
FIRST PRINT FIELD: NAME//
THEN PRINT FIELD: PERSON CLASS// (multiple)
THEN PRINT PERSON CLASS SUB-FIELD: Person Class//
THEN PRINT PERSON CLASS SUB-FIELD: Person Class://
THEN PRINT PERSON CLASS FIELD: CLASSIFICATION//
THEN PRINT PERSON CLASS FIELD: AREA OF SPECIALIZATION
THEN PRINT PERSON CLASS FIELD:
THEN PRINT PERSON CLASS SUB-FIELD:
THEN PRINT FIELD:

NOTE: In the first field, use the first several characters of the classification you want to print. In the next field, use the same characters, except replace the last character with a "Z". This instructs the program to capture all individuals that fall into this classification. In the preceding example, all active Physicians with the specialization of Anesthesiology will print.

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3. Export the list to Excel

a. If you want to use an application like Microsoft Excel to manipulate data stored in a VA FileMan file, you need to exchange that data between VA FileMan and your application. VA FileMan provides the Import and Export Tools for this purpose.

b. You can use VA FileMan's Export Tool to export the list of providers from the VA FileMan file to Microsoft Excel. If you know how to print file entries, you already know most of the procedures to export file entries. The Export Tool is based on the standard VA FileMan Print File Entries option.

c. The Export Tool creates a specially formatted print output. Some limitations apply to data exports that do not apply to setting up a regular print (e.g., WORD-PROCESSING-type fields cannot be exported). Some capabilities are available when exporting that are not when you are printing (e.g., the records you export can be longer than 245 characters, if you are using a delimited format).

ATTACHMENT B

VHA STANDARDIZED CREDENTIALS OR DEGREE FOR BILLING

1. This attachment provides the standardized list to use when populating the DEGREE field of the New Person File. The DEGREE field in the Veterans Health Information System and Technology Architecture (VistA) New Person File is the official electronic repository of the necessary provider credentials (licensure or degree). Entries must be as follows:

- a. All capital letters.
- b. Credentials or degrees only as listed in paragraph 5 of this attachment.
- c. No punctuation.
- d. No spaces.

2. Action Required

a. Medical Center Directors must determine who is responsible for establishing and entering data into the *New Person File* and where the credentials (licensure or degree) information is maintained, i.e., human resources, service and/or product line, credentialing files. The credentials for all providers must be verified for accuracy, hierarchy, and conformance with this attachment. Existing entries in the DEGREE field of the *New Person File* must be validated, or newly entered, for all providers billed on all billing forms.

b. If a secondary data source is used for verification of this data, i.e., tracking databases used by staff for maintenance of credentials data, the data needs to be validated through a sampling technique. This must be accomplished prior to implementing the national electronic data interchange (EDI) solution.

3. Providers having more than One Credential

a. A provider may have more than one credential or degree; for example, a physician may also be a dentist, holding both Doctor of Medical Dentistry (DMD) and Doctor of Medicine (MD) credentials. If this physician or dentist works primarily as a medical doctor, it is important that MD appears first in the DEGREE field.

b. The claim would be denied for 'improper service provider' if the DMD appeared first when the physician works primarily as a medical doctor and the services performed were not dentistry services.

4. Character Limitation

a. The degree field is limited to three characters. *NOTE: This character limitation is part of the legislated national standard for health care EDI billing, and not a limitation of VA's system.*

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b. The automated system places only the first three characters on the claim form, therefore, it is essential that the provider's credentials be shown as explained in paragraph 5.

5. Ongoing Maintenance of the DEGREE Field. Ongoing maintenance of the DEGREE field is the responsibility of each local VA facility. Because new providers are constantly added, facility Directors must establish a local VA medical center process to ensure that the field is maintained.

VHA AND MEDICARE CREDENTIALS	DESCRIPTION
CNA	CERTIFIED REGISTERED NURSE ANESTHETIST
CH	DOCTOR OF CHIROPRACTIC MEDICINE
CNM	CERTIFIED NURSE MIDWIFE
CNS	CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALIST
Social Work Credentials	
CSW	CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER
CSW	CERTIFIED CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER
CSW	LICENSED CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER
CSW	LICENSED MASTERS OF SOCIAL WORK
CSW	MASTER'S DEGREE SOCIAL WORKER
Doctor of Medicine, Osteopathy, Podiatry, Education	
DO	DOCTOR OF OSTEOPATHY
DPM	DOCTOR OF PODIATRY MEDICINE
EDD	DOCTORATE IN EDUCATION
MD	DOCTOR OF MEDICINE
Nurse Practitioner Credentials	
NP	NURSE PRACTITIONER
NP	FAMILY NURSE PRACTITIONER
NP	GERIATRIC NURSE PRACTITIONER
NP	REGISTERED NURSE PRACTITIONER
Doctor of Optometry	
OD	DOCTOR OF OPTOMETRY
Physician Assistant Credentials	
PA	PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT
PA	PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT - CERTIFIED
PA	REGISTERED PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT
PA	REGISTERED PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT - CERTIFIED

**VHA AND MEDICARE
CREDENTIALS** **DESCRIPTION**

Doctorate Degree, Psychology and Others

PHD	DOCTORATE DEGREE, PSYCHOLOGY AND OTHERS
PSY	PSYCHOLOGIST
CP	CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST
AA	ANESTHESIA ASSISTANT
RD	REGISTERED DIETITIAN
RPH	CLINICAL PHARMACIST

Occupational Therapy Credentials

OT	OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST
	LICENSED OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST
OT	REGISTERED
OT	OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST LICENSED
OT	OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST, REGISTERED
	OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST/REGISTERED &
OT	LICENSED
OT	REGISTERED OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

Physical Therapy Credentials

PT	PHYSICAL THERAPY PHYSIO-THERAPIST
PT	LICENSED PHYSICAL THERAPIST
PT	REGISTERED PHYSICAL THERAPIST

Doctor of Dental Surgery and/or Medical Dentistry

DDS	DOCTOR OF DENTAL SURGERY
DMD	DOCTOR OF MEDICAL DENTISTRY

Audiologist (Must have one of the following degrees)

MA	AUDIOLOGIST
MS	AUDIOLOGIST
PHD	AUDIOLOGIST
AUD	AUDIOLOGIST
EDD	AUDIOLOGIST
DSC	DOCTOR OF SCIENCE
MCD	MASTERS OF COMMUNICATION DISORDERS
MED	MASTERS OF EDUCATION
MSC	MASTERS OF SCIENCE (VARIATION ON MS)
MAT	MASTERS OF ARTS IN TEACHING
MHS	MASTERS OF HEALTH SCIENCE
MCS	MASTERS OF CLINICAL SCIENCE
MNS	MASTERS OF NATURAL SCIENCE