

SAFEGUARDS:

CMS has safeguards in place for authorized users and monitors such users to ensure against unauthorized use. Personnel having access to the system have been trained in the Privacy Act and information security requirements. Employees who maintain records in this system are instructed not to release data until the intended recipient agrees to implement appropriate management, operational and technical safeguards sufficient to protect the confidentiality, integrity and availability of the information and information systems and to prevent unauthorized access.

This system will conform to all applicable Federal laws and regulations and Federal, HHS, and CMS policies and standards as they relate to information security and data privacy. These laws and regulations may apply but are not limited to: The Privacy Act of 1974; the Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002; the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986; the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996; the E-Government Act of 2002, the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996; the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003, and the corresponding implementing regulations. OMB Circular A-130, Management of Federal Resources, Appendix III, Security of Federal Automated Information Resources also applies. Federal, HHS, and CMS policies and standards include but are not limited to: All pertinent National Institute of Standards and Technology publications; the HHS Information Systems Program Handbook and the CMS Information Security Handbook.

RETENTION AND DISPOSAL:

Records are retained for up to 3 years following expiration of an individual's authority to enter secured areas. When an individual is no longer authorized, information is deleted from magnetic media immediately.

SYSTEM MANAGER AND ADDRESS:

Director, Emergency Management and Response Group, Office of Operations Management, CMS, Room SLL-11-28, 7500 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, Maryland 21244-1850.

NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE:

For purpose of access, the subject individual should write to the system manager who will require the system name, assigned card key number, and building/secure area, and for verification purposes, the subject individual's name (woman's maiden name, if applicable), and SSN.

Furnishing the SSN is voluntary, but it may make searching for a record easier and prevent delay.

RECORD ACCESS PROCEDURE:

For purpose of access, use the same procedures outlined in Notification Procedures above. Requestors should also specify the record contents being sought. (These procedures are in accordance with department regulation 45 CFR 5b.5(a)(2).)

CONTESTING RECORDS PROCEDURES:

The subject individual should contact the system manager named above, and reasonably identify the records and specify the information to be contested. State the corrective action sought and the reasons for the correction with supporting justification. (These Procedures are in accordance with Department regulation 45 CFR 5b.7.)

RECORDS SOURCE CATEGORIES:

The data contained in this system of records are obtained from the individuals who submit a request for access to a secure building or area.

SYSTEMS EXEMPTED FROM CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE ACT:

None.

[FR Doc. E6-19503 Filed 11-17-06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4120-03-P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Privacy Act of 1974; Report of a Modified or Altered System

AGENCY: Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

ACTION: Notice of a Modified or Altered System of Records (SOR).

SUMMARY: In accordance with the requirements of the Privacy Act, we are proposing to modify or alter an existing SOR titled, "Medicare-Cancer Registry Record System (MCR), System No. 09-70-0042," established at 53 FR 38082 (September 29, 1988), and most recently modified at 65 FR 37792 (June 16, 2000). We propose to assign a new CMS identification number to this system to simplify the obsolete and confusing numbering system originally designed to identify the Bureau, Office, or Center that maintained information in the Health Care Financing Administration systems of records. The new assigned identifying number for this system should read: System No. 09-70-0509.

We propose to modify existing routine use number 2 that permits disclosure to agency contractors and consultants to include disclosure to CMS grantees who perform a task for the agency. CMS grantees, charged with completing projects or activities that require CMS data to carry out that activity, are classified separately from CMS contractors and/or consultants. The modified routine use will be renumbered as routine use number 1. We will delete routine use number 3 authorizing disclosure to support constituent requests made to a congressional representative. If an authorization for the disclosure has been obtained from the data subject, then no routine use is needed. The Privacy Act allows for disclosures with the "prior written consent" of the data subject.

We propose to broaden the scope of the disclosure provisions of this system by adding a routine use to permit the release of information to another Federal or state agency to contribute to the accuracy of CMS' proper payment of Medicare benefits, to enable such agency to administer a Federal health benefits program, and/or as necessary to enable such agency to fulfill a requirement of a Federal statute or regulation that implements a health benefits program funded in whole or in part with Federal funds, to evaluate and to monitor the amount and kinds of services received by Medicare beneficiaries contracting cancer. The added routine use will be numbered as routine use number 2.

We will further broaden the scope of this system by including the section titled "Additional Circumstances Affecting Routine Use Disclosures," that addresses "Protected Health Information (PHI)" and "small cell size." The requirement for compliance with HHS regulation "Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information" applies whenever the system collects or maintains PHI. This system may contain PHI. In addition, our policy to prohibit release if there is a possibility that an individual can be identified through "small cell size" will apply to the data disclosed from this system.

We are modifying the language in the remaining routine uses to provide a proper explanation as to the need for the routine use and to provide clarity to CMS's intention to disclose individual-specific information contained in this system. The routine uses will then be prioritized and reordered according to their usage. We will also take the opportunity to update any sections of the system that were affected by the

recent reorganization or because of the impact of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA) (Pub. L. 108–173) provisions and to update language in the administrative sections to correspond with language used in other CMS SORs.

The primary purpose of the system of records is to link individual-level data from the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) tumor registry system, operated by the National Cancer Institute (NCI), with Medicare enrollment and claims data. This linked file will greatly enhance CMS's and NCI's ability to understand and evaluate the amount and kinds of services received by Medicare beneficiaries contracting cancer. Information retrieved from this system of records will also be disclosed to: (1) Support regulatory, reimbursement, and policy functions performed within the agency or by a contractor, consultant or grantee; (2) assist another Federal or state agency to conduct activities related to this system; (3) support research, evaluation, or epidemiological projects related to the prevention of disease or disability, or the restoration or maintenance of health, and for payment related projects; and (4) support litigation involving the agency. We have provided background information about the modified system in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section below. Although the Privacy Act requires only that CMS provide an opportunity for interested persons to comment on the routine uses, CMS invites comments on all portions of this notice. See "Effective Dates" section for comment period.

DATES: Effective Dates: CMS filed a modified or altered system report with the Chair of the House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, the Chair of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs, and the Administrator, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on November 9, 2006. To ensure that all parties have adequate time in which to comment, the modified system, including routine uses, will become effective 30 days from the publication of the notice, or 40 days from the date it was submitted to OMB and Congress, whichever is later, unless CMS receives comments that require alterations to this notice.

ADDRESSES: The public should address comments to: CMS Privacy Officer, Division of Privacy Compliance, Enterprise Architecture and Strategy Group, Office of Information Services, CMS, Room N2–04–27, 7500 Security

Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21244–1850. Comments received will be available for review at this location, by appointment, during regular business hours, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m.–3 p.m., eastern time zone.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Gerald Riley, Social Science Research Analyst, Division of Health Systems Research, Research and Evaluations Group, Office of Research, Development and Information, CMS, Mail Stop C3–20–11, 7500 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21244–1850. He can also be reached by telephone at 410–786–6699, or via e-mail at gerald.riley@cms.hhs.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Description of the Modified or Altered System of Records

A. Statutory and Regulatory Basis for System

Authority for the collection and maintenance of this system is given under the provisions of section 1875(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 139511(a)) and sections 301 and 410–416 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 241 and 285–285a–5).

B. Collection and Maintenance of Data in the System

The system collects and maintains information on Medicare beneficiaries diagnosed with cancer in 12 geographic areas of the United States. Data is collected from 12 Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) program cancer registries linked with Medicare enrollment and claims data. The areas covered by the 12 registries are Iowa, Utah, Hawaii, New Mexico, Connecticut, New Jersey, California, Louisiana, Kentucky, Atlanta, Detroit, and western Washington.

II. Agency Policies, Procedures, and Restrictions on Routine Use

A. The Privacy Act permits us to disclose information without an individual's consent if the information is to be used for a purpose that is compatible with the purpose(s) for which the information was collected. Any such disclosure of data is known as a "routine use." The government will only release MCR information that can be associated with an individual as provided for under "Section III. Proposed Routine Use Disclosures of Data in the System." Both identifiable and non-identifiable data may be disclosed under a routine use.

We will only collect the minimum personal data necessary to achieve the purpose of MCR. CMS has the following policies and procedures concerning

disclosures of information that will be maintained in the system. Disclosure of information from this system will be approved only to the extent necessary to accomplish the purpose of the disclosure and only after CMS:

1. Determines that the use or disclosure is consistent with the reason that the data is being collected, e.g., to understand and evaluate the amount and kinds of services received by Medicare beneficiaries contracting cancer.

2. Determines:

a. That the purpose for which the disclosure is to be made can only be accomplished if the record is provided in individually identifiable form;

b. That the purpose for which the disclosure is to be made is of sufficient importance to warrant the potential effect and/or risk on the privacy of the individual that additional exposure of the record might bring; and

c. That there is a strong probability that the proposed use of the data would in fact accomplish the stated purpose(s).

3. Requires the information recipient to:

a. Establish administrative, technical, and physical safeguards to prevent unauthorized use of disclosure of the record; and

b. Remove or destroy at the earliest time all patient-identifiable information.

4. Determines that the data are valid and reliable.

III. Proposed Routine Use Disclosures of Data in the System

A. The Privacy Act allows us to disclose information without an individual's consent if the information is to be used for a purpose that is compatible with the purpose(s) for which the information was collected. Any such compatible use of data is known as a "routine use." The proposed routine uses in this system meet the compatibility requirement of the Privacy Act. We are proposing to establish the following routine use disclosures of information maintained in the system:

1. To support agency contractors, consultants, or grantees, who have been engaged by the agency to assist in the performance of a service related to this collection and who need to have access to the records in order to perform the activity.

We contemplate disclosing information under this routine use only in situations in which CMS may enter into a contractual or similar agreement with a third party to assist in accomplishing CMS function relating to purposes for this system.

CMS occasionally contracts out certain of its functions when doing so

would contribute to effective and efficient operations. CMS must be able to give a contractor, consultant or grantee whatever information is necessary for the contractor or consultant to fulfill its duties. In these situations, safeguards are provided in the contract prohibiting the contractor, consultant or grantee from using or disclosing the information for any purpose other than that described in the contract and requires the contractor, consultant or grantee to return or destroy all information at the completion of the contract.

2. To assist another Federal or state agency to:

a. Contribute to the accuracy of CMS's proper payment of Medicare benefits,

b. Enable such agency to administer a Federal health benefits program, or as necessary to enable such agency to fulfill a requirement of a Federal statute or regulation that implements a health benefits program funded in whole or in part with Federal funds, and/or

c. Evaluate and monitor the amount and kinds of services received by Medicare beneficiaries contracting cancer.

Other Federal or state agencies in their administration of a Federal health program may require MCR information in order to support evaluations and monitoring of services received and reimbursement for services provided.

3. To assist an individual or organization for research, evaluation or epidemiological projects related to the prevention of disease or disability, or the restoration or maintenance of health, and for payment related projects.

The collected data will provide the research, evaluation and epidemiological projects a broader, longitudinal, national perspective of the data. CMS anticipates that many researchers will have legitimate requests to use these data in projects that could ultimately improve the care provided to Medicare patients and the policy that governs the care. CMS understands the concerns about the privacy and confidentiality of the release of data for a research use. Disclosure of data for research and evaluation purposes may involve aggregate data rather than individual-specific data.

We contemplate disclosing information under this routine use only in situations in which CMS may enter into a contractual or similar agreement with another Federal agency to assist in accomplishing CMS functions relating to purposes for this system of records.

4. To support the Department of Justice (DOJ), court or adjudicatory body when:

a. The agency or any component thereof, or

b. Any employee of the agency in his or her official capacity, or

c. Any employee of the agency in his or her individual capacity where the DOJ has agreed to represent the employee, or

d. The United States Government is a party to litigation or has an interest in such litigation, and by careful review, CMS determines that the records are both relevant and necessary to the litigation and that the use of such records by the DOJ, court or adjudicatory body is compatible with the purpose for which the agency collected the records.

Whenever CMS is involved in litigation, and occasionally when another party is involved in litigation and CMS' policies or operations could be affected by the outcome of the litigation, CMS would be able to disclose information to the DOJ, court or adjudicatory body involved.

B. Additional Provisions Affecting Routine Use Disclosures

To the extent this system contains Protected Health Information (PHI) as defined by HHS regulation "Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information" (45 CFR parts 160 and 164, subparts A and E) 65 FR 82462 (12-28-00). Disclosures of such PHI that are otherwise authorized by these routine uses may only be made if, and as, permitted or required by the "Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information." (See 45 CFR 164-512(a)(1)).

In addition, our policy will be to prohibit release even of data not directly identifiable, except pursuant to one of the routine uses or if required by law, if we determine there is a possibility that an individual can be identified through implicit deduction based on small cell sizes (instances where the patient population is so small that individuals could, because of the small size, use this information to deduce the identity of the beneficiary).

IV. Safeguards

CMS has safeguards in place for authorized users and monitors such users to ensure against unauthorized use. Personnel having access to the system have been trained in the Privacy Act and information security requirements. Employees who maintain records in this system are instructed not to release data until the intended recipient agrees to implement appropriate management, operational and technical safeguards sufficient to protect the confidentiality, integrity and

availability of the information and information systems and to prevent unauthorized access.

This system will conform to all applicable Federal laws and regulations and Federal, HHS, and CMS policies and standards as they relate to information security and data privacy. These laws and regulations may apply but are not limited to: The Privacy Act of 1974; the Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002; the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986; the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996; the E-Government Act of 2002, the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996; the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003, and the corresponding implementing regulations. OMB Circular A-130, Management of Federal Resources, Appendix III, Security of Federal Automated Information Resources also applies. Federal, HHS, and CMS policies and standards include but are not limited to: All pertinent National Institute of Standards and Technology publications; the HHS Information Systems Program Handbook and the CMS Information Security Handbook.

V. Effects of the Modified System of Records on Individual Rights

CMS proposes to modify this system in accordance with the principles and requirements of the Privacy Act and will collect, use, and disseminate information only as prescribed therein. Data in this system will be subject to the authorized releases in accordance with the routine uses identified in this system of records.

CMS will take precautionary measures (see item IV above) to minimize the risks of unauthorized access to the records and the potential harm to individual privacy or other personal or property rights of patients whose data are maintained in the system. CMS will collect only that information necessary to perform the system's functions. In addition, CMS will make disclosure from the proposed system only with consent of the subject individual, or his/her legal representative, or in accordance with an applicable exception provision of the Privacy Act. CMS, therefore, does not anticipate an unfavorable effect on individual privacy as a result of information relating to individuals.

Dated: November 8, 2006.

John R. Dyer,

Chief Operating Officer, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

SYSTEM NO. 09-70-0509

SYSTEM NAME:

"Medicare-Cancer Registry Record System (MCR)," HHS/CMS/ORDI.

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION:

Level Three Privacy Act Sensitive Data.

SYSTEM LOCATION:

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Data Center, 7500 Security Boulevard, North Building, First Floor, Baltimore, Maryland 21244-1850 and South Building, Baltimore, Maryland 21244-1850.

CATEGORIES OF INDIVIDUALS COVERED BY THE SYSTEM:

The system collects and maintains information on Medicare beneficiaries diagnosed with cancer in 12 geographic areas of the United States.

CATEGORIES OF RECORDS IN THE SYSTEM:

The system collects and maintains data from 12 Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) program cancer registries linked with Medicare enrollment and claims data. The areas covered by the 12 registries are Iowa, Utah, Hawaii, New Mexico, Connecticut, New Jersey, California, Louisiana, Kentucky, Atlanta, Detroit, and Western Washington State.

AUTHORITY FOR MAINTENANCE OF THE SYSTEM:

Authority for the collection and maintenance of this system is given under the provisions of section 1875(a) of the Social Security Act (42 United States Code (U.S.C.) 139511(a)) and sections 301 and 410-416 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 241 and 285-285a-5).

PURPOSE(S) OF THE SYSTEM:

The primary purpose of the system of records is to link individual-level data from the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) tumor registry system, operated by the National Cancer Institute (NCI), with Medicare enrollment and claims data. This linked file will greatly enhance CMS's and NCI's ability to understand and evaluate the amount and kinds of services received by Medicare beneficiaries contracting cancer. Information retrieved from this system of records will also be disclosed to: (1) Support regulatory, reimbursement, and policy functions performed within the agency or by a contractor, consultant or CMS grantee; (2) assist another Federal

agency to conduct activities related to this system; (3) support research, evaluation, or epidemiological projects related to the prevention of disease or disability, or the restoration or maintenance of health, and for payment related projects; and (4) support litigation involving the agency.

ROUTINE USES OF RECORDS MAINTAINED IN THE SYSTEM, INCLUDING CATEGORIES OR USERS AND THE PURPOSES OF SUCH USES:

A. The Privacy Act allows us to disclose information without an individual's consent if the information is to be used for a purpose that is compatible with the purpose(s) for which the information was collected. Any such compatible use of data is known as a "routine use." The proposed routine uses in this system meet the compatibility requirement of the Privacy Act. We are proposing to establish the following routine use disclosures of information maintained in the system:

1. To support agency contractors, consultants, or grantees, who have been engaged by the agency to assist in the performance of a service related to this collection and who need to have access to the records in order to perform the activity.
 2. To assist another Federal or state agency to:
 - a. Contribute to the accuracy of CMS's proper payment of Medicare benefits,
 - b. Enable such agency to administer a Federal health benefits program, or as necessary to enable such agency to fulfill a requirement of a Federal statute or regulation that implements a health benefits program funded in whole or in part with federal funds, and/or
 - c. Evaluate and monitor the amount and kinds of services received by Medicare beneficiaries contracting cancer.
 3. To assist an individual or organization for research, evaluation or epidemiological projects related to the prevention of disease or disability, or the restoration or maintenance of health, and for payment related projects.
 4. To support the Department of Justice (DOJ), court or adjudicatory body when:
 - a. The agency or any component thereof, or
 - b. Any employee of the agency in his or her official capacity, or
 - c. Any employee of the agency in his or her individual capacity where the DOJ has agreed to represent the employee, or
 - d. The United States Government
- Is a party to litigation or has an interest in such litigation, and by careful review, CMS determines that the records are both relevant and necessary

to the litigation and that the use of such records by the DOJ, court or adjudicatory body is compatible with the purpose for which the agency collected the records.

B. *Additional Provisions Affecting Routine Use Disclosures.* To the extent this system contains Protected Health Information (PHI) as defined by HHS regulation "Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information" (45 CFR parts 160 and 164, subparts A and E) 65 FR 82462 (12-28-00). Disclosures of such PHI that are otherwise authorized by these routine uses may only be made if, and as, permitted or required by the "Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information" (See 45 CFR 164-512(a)(1)).

In addition, our policy will be to prohibit release even of data not directly identifiable, except pursuant to one of the routine uses or if required by law, if we determine there is a possibility that an individual can be identified through implicit deduction based on small cell sizes (instances where the patient population is so small that individuals could, because of the small size, use this information to deduce the identity of the beneficiary).

POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR STORING, RETRIEVING, ACCESSING, RETAINING, AND DISPOSING OF RECORDS IN THE SYSTEM:

STORAGE:

All records are stored on paper and magnetic disk.

RETRIEVABILITY:

Magnetic media records are retrieved by the name of the employees or other authorized individual and/or card key number. Paper records are retrieved alphabetically by name.

SAFEGUARDS:

CMS has safeguards in place for authorized users and monitors such users to ensure against unauthorized use. Personnel having access to the system have been trained in the Privacy Act and information security requirements. Employees who maintain records in this system are instructed not to release data until the intended recipient agrees to implement appropriate management, operational and technical safeguards sufficient to protect the confidentiality, integrity and availability of the information and information systems and to prevent unauthorized access.

This system will conform to all applicable Federal laws and regulations and Federal, HHS, and CMS policies and standards as they relate to information security and data privacy.

These laws and regulations may apply but are not limited to: The Privacy Act of 1974; the Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002; the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986; the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996; the E-Government Act of 2002, the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996; the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003, and the corresponding implementing regulations. OMB Circular A-130, Management of Federal Resources, Appendix III, Security of Federal Automated Information Resources also applies. Federal, HHS, and CMS policies and standards include but are not limited to: All pertinent National Institute of Standards and Technology publications; the HHS Information Systems Program Handbook and the CMS Information Security Handbook.

RETENTION AND DISPOSAL:

Records are maintained in a secure storage area with identifiers as long as needed for program research. Records will be disposed 3 years after research is completed.

SYSTEM MANAGER AND ADDRESS:

Director, Division of Health Systems Research, Research and Evaluations Group, Office of Research Development and Information.

NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE:

For purpose of access, the subject individual should write to the system manager who will require the system name, assigned card key number, and building/secure area, and for verification purposes, the subject individual's name (woman's maiden name, if applicable), and SSN. Furnishing the SSN is voluntary, but it may make searching for a record easier and prevent delay.

RECORD ACCESS PROCEDURE:

For purpose of access, use the same procedures outlined in Notification Procedures above. Requestors should also specify the record contents being sought. (These procedures are in accordance with department regulation 45 CFR 5b.5(a)(2)).

CONTESTING RECORDS PROCEDURES:

The subject individual should contact the system manager named above, and reasonably identify the records and specify the information to be contested. State the corrective action sought and the reasons for the correction with supporting justification. (These procedures are in accordance with department regulation 45 CFR 5b.7).

RECORDS SOURCE CATEGORIES:

Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) program cancer registry records and Medicare enrollment and claims files.

SYSTEMS EXEMPTED FROM CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE ACT:

None.

[FR Doc. E6-19504 Filed 11-17-06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4120-03-P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Privacy Act of 1974; Report of a Modified or Altered System of Records

AGENCY: Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

ACTION: Notice of a Modified or Altered System of Records (SOR).

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974, we are proposing to modify or alter an existing SOR, "National Claims History (NCH)," System No. 09-70-0005, last published at 67 FR 57015 (September 6, 2002). We propose to assign a new CMS identification number to this system to simplify the obsolete and confusing numbering system originally designed to identify the Bureau, Office, or Center that maintained information in the Health Care Financing Administration systems of records. The new assigned identifying number for this system should read: System No. 09-70-0558.

We propose to modify existing routine use number one that permits disclosure to agency contractors and consultants to include disclosure to CMS grantees who perform a task for the agency. CMS grantees, charged with completing projects or activities that require CMS data to carry out that activity, are classified separate from CMS contractors and/or consultants. The modified routine use will remain as routine use number one. We will broaden the scope of routine uses number 8 and 9, authorizing disclosures to combat fraud and abuse in the Medicare and Medicaid programs to include combating "waste" which refers to specific beneficiary/recipient practices that result in unnecessary cost to all Federally-funded health benefit programs.

We will delete routine use number six authorizing disclosure to support constituent requests made to a congressional representative. If an

authorization for the disclosure has been obtained from the data subject, then no routine use is needed. The Privacy Act allows for disclosures with the "prior written consent" of the data subject.

We are modifying the language in the remaining routine uses to provide a proper explanation as to the need for the routine use and to provide clarity to CMS's intention to disclose individual-specific information contained in this system. The routine uses will then be prioritized and reordered according to their usage. We will also take the opportunity to update any sections of the system that were affected by the recent reorganization or because of the impact of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA) (Pub. L. 108-173) provisions and to update language in the administrative sections to correspond with language used in other CMS SORs.

The primary purpose of this modified system is to collect and maintain billing and utilization data on Medicare beneficiaries enrolled in hospital insurance (Part A) or medical insurance (Part B) of the Medicare program for statistical and research purposes related to evaluating and studying the operation and effectiveness of the Medicare program. The information retrieved from this system of records will also be disclosed to: (1) Support regulatory, reimbursement, and policy functions performed within the agency or by a contractor, consultant, or grantee; (2) assist another Federal or state agency, agency of a state government, an agency established by state law, or its fiscal agent; (3) support providers and suppliers of services for administration of Title XVIII; (4) assist third parties where the contact is expected to have information relating to the individual's capacity to manage his or her own affairs; (5) assist QIOs; (6) process individual insurance claims by other insurers; (7) facilitate research on the quality and effectiveness of care provided, as well as payment-related projects; (8) support litigation involving the agency; and (9) combat fraud, waste, and abuse in Federally-funded health benefits programs. We have provided background information about the modified system in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section below. Although the Privacy Act requires only that CMS provide an opportunity for interested persons to comment on the modified or altered routine uses, CMS invites comments on all portions of this notice. See "Effective Dates" section for comment period.