

## **Required Security Features for Tamper-Resistant Prescriptions**

Pharmacists and prescribers should be aware of the approaching implementation date of April 1, 2008, for the tamper-resistant prescription pad law, as well as the provisions relating to what security features must be included on tamper-resistant prescriptions. According to tamper-resistant prescription regulations, outpatient drugs paid in any part by Medicaid (primary, or through secondary or tertiary coverage), will only be reimbursable if “nonelectronic written prescriptions are executed on a tamper-resistant pad.” Tamper-resistant prescriptions written from April 1, 2008, to September 30, 2008, must contain at least one of the standard security features required by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). All tamper-resistant prescriptions written on October 1, 2008, and after will be required to contain all three of the CMS required standard security features. Tamper-resistant prescriptions will be auditable and Medicaid will recover inappropriate payments for noncompliance with the tamper-resistant prescription pad law. Prescriptions communicated verbally to the pharmacy, transmitted via facsimile or electronically prescribed, will not be affected by the tamper-resistant prescription pad law.

### **CMS-Identified Security Feature Characteristics for Tamper-resistant Prescriptions**

1. One or more industry-recognized features designed to prevent unauthorized copying of a completed or blank prescription form

Examples of this feature:

- “Void” or “Illegal” pantograph (the word “void” appears when the prescription is photocopied)
- Reverse “RX” or white area on prescription (“Rx” symbol or white area disappears when photocopied. The feature is normally paired with “Void” pantograph.)
- Coin-reactive ink (ink changes color when rubbed by a coin)
- Security back print (security feature printed on the back of the prescription, generally “Security Prescription”)
- Watermarking
- Diagonal lines (diagonal lines with the word “void” or “copy”)
- Micro printing (very small font writing, perhaps acting as a signature line)

2. One or more industry-recognized features designed to prevent the erasure or modification of information written on the prescription by the prescriber

Examples of this feature:

- Uniform non-white background (background consists of a solid color or consistent pattern that has been printed on the paper. If an individual attempts to erase or copy the prescription, the background color will look altered and show the color of the underlying paper.)
- Quantity check boxes (The range box corresponding to the quantity prescribed MUST be checked for the prescription to be valid.)

- Refill indicator check boxes (refill number or “NR” must be used to be a valid prescription)
  - Prescription preprinted with “Rx is void if more than \_\_ Rxs on paper” (line must be completed to be a valid prescription, reduces ability to add medications to the prescription)
  - Quantity border and fill (For computer-generated prescriptions, quantities are surrounded by special characters, such as asterisks, to prevent alteration.)
  - Refill border and fill (For computer-generated prescriptions, refill quantities are surrounded by special characters, such as asterisks to prevent alteration.)
  - Chemically reactive paper (Paper will react and leave a visible mark if exposed to chemicals used to alter the prescription.)
  - Paper toner fuser (special printer toner that establishes a strong print bond with paper that is difficult to tamper)
  - Safety or security paper with colored pattern (White or another color will appear if paper is erased.)
3. One or more industry-recognized features designed to prevent the use of counterfeit prescription forms

Examples of this feature:

- Security features and descriptions listed on prescription (list of security features are clearly identified on the prescription paper for compliance purposes)
- Serial number (number issued by printer of prescription, may not be sequentially)
- Encoding techniques (bar coding on prescriptions, serial numbers, or batch numbers)
- Logos (sometimes included as part of the background color or pantograph)
- Metal stripe security (metal stripe on prescription)
- Heat-sensing imprint (touching the imprint or design will cause it to disappear)
- Invisible fluorescent fibers/ink (visible only under black light)
- Thermo chromic ink (ink changes color with temperature change)
- Holograms that interfere with photocopying