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# FEHB Program Carrier Letter

All Health Maintenance Organizations

U.S. Office of Personnel Management  
Office of Insurance Programs

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**Letter No. 2000-11**

**Date: March 1, 2000**

Fee-for-service [ ] Experience-rated HMO [ 11 ] Community-rated HMO [ 11 ]

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**SUBJECT: Mental Health and Substance Abuse Parity Evaluation**

In Carrier Letter 1999-027, we discussed introducing Mental Health and Substance Abuse (MHSA) parity in the 2001 contract year. This letter highlights a 3-year evaluation project that will assess MHSA parity in the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program.

The evaluation is co-sponsored by the Department of Health and Human Services and OPM, and will be conducted on plans with 500 or more FEHB enrollees. Therefore, if you are a plan with fewer than 500 FEHB enrollees, you may disregard this carrier letter.

The evaluation design is under development and may include areas such as plans' MHSA benefits before and after parity, beneficiary access to and utilization of MHSA benefits pre- and post-parity, the cost of parity, and plan and beneficiary satisfaction with parity. However, the exact features of the evaluation will be determined by the availability of data. This is where we need your help.

On March 20<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m., we will hold a meeting to discuss the MHSA parity evaluation and obtain carrier input on the data plans can provide for the evaluation. The meeting will be held in room 5H09 at OPM, 1900 E St., NW, Washington, DC, with the option of participating by conference call. Please contact Janet Pfleeger of the Policy and Information Division at (202) 606-0004 to let her know whether you are interested in participating in the meeting.

Sincerely,

(signed)

Frank D. Titus  
Assistant Director  
for Insurance Programs