



**Connecticut Medical Assistance Program**  
Policy Transmittal 2015-18

Provider Bulletin 2015-49  
July 2015

Roderick L. Bremby, Commissioner

Effective Date: August 1, 2015

TO: Medical Equipment, Devices and Supplies (MEDS) Providers, Physicians, Advanced Practice Registered Nurses, Physician Assistants, Medical Clinics, Family Planning Clinics

RE: Important Changes to Electronic Orders for MEDS Products

The Department of Social Services (DSS) is updating standards for the transmission of electronic prescriptions to Medical Equipment, Devices and Supplies (MEDS) providers.

On or after July 1, 2015, the only allowable transmission of electronic prescriptions will be via DIRECT Secure Messaging. In partnership with our vendor, Secure Exchange Solutions (SES), the Department implemented a Web portal for transmission of orders to MEDS providers.

As of July 1, 2014, the use of an electronic signature was allowed in lieu of a handwritten signature, only if the guidelines stated in Provider Bulletin 2014-47 "Interim Guidance Regarding Electronic Orders for MEDS Products" were met. **This policy supersedes the interim policy in Provider Bulletin 2014-47.**

Please note: A hard copy prescription is still an allowable method of transmission. All other applicable requirements remain in effect and are not being changed by this transmittal. For further information regarding current policy and regulations, please go to [www.ctdssmap.com](http://www.ctdssmap.com), and select "Information", then "Publications". Once on the Publications page, go to Chapter 7 and select "MEDS", then click "View Chapter 7".

**What is Direct Secure Messaging?**

Direct Secure Messaging is a secure and encrypted standards-based method for exchanging protected health information that functions like regular e-mail. Physicians, practitioners, and other care providers will now not only be able to share protected health information, but also be able to transmit prescription orders to providers for Medical Equipment Devices and Supplies (MEDS) products.

**Benefits of Direct Secure Messaging:**

- Reduces the time spent obtaining completed original prescriptions;
- Replaces non-secure fax, phone and mail;
- Provides a structured way to import data directly into an Electronic Health Records (EHR) system;
- Includes delivery confirmation;
- Complies with Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) security rules;
- Decreases the risk of errors due to illegibility;
- Provides user authentication, message integrity, and nonrepudiation; and
- Direct Secure Messaging is limited to users that have been authorized for an account.

Implementation of Direct Secure Messaging will help the coordination of patient care and the seamless transmission of electronic prescription orders from Connecticut Medical Assistance Program (CMAP) enrolled practitioners (e.g., physicians, nurse practitioners, APRNs and other providers authorized to prescribe MEDS items) to MEDS providers.

**Who Qualifies for a Direct Messaging Account?**

All CMAP enrolled practitioners and MEDS providers are eligible for an account. This includes practitioners who were previously qualified for Direct Secure Messaging capability through the Medicaid EHR Incentive Program.

CMAP practitioners who currently do not have an EHR system or Direct Secure Messaging capabilities can now enroll for a free stand-alone Direct Secure

Messaging account without enrolling in the Medicaid EHR incentive program.

If you are currently a CMAP enrolled practitioner and have an EHR system with Direct Secure Messaging capabilities, you will now be able to transmit prescription orders to MEDS providers. Your current system and workflow will be compatible to the Direct Secure Messaging system that DSS is implementing.

Verified MEDS providers will be enrolled with either a Professional or Organization account. MEDS providers may purchase a yearly professional account for a nominal fee which is currently \$80.00 per year through SES. MEDS providers may also purchase an organization account for \$195.00 per year through SES. Please contact SES for more information on the types of accounts available for purchase.

**How to obtain your Direct Secure Messaging account:**

To obtain an account, there is an identity verification process that confirms that users are members of the health provider community and have a legitimate reason to exchange patient health information. Direct Secure Messaging is limited to users that have been authorized for an account; therefore, validation is necessary to gain access to a trusted network. This enrollment process helps ensure that transmission of prescriptions for MEDS items is secure and accurate.

**Guidelines for Practitioners and Providers for Utilizing Direct Secure Messaging:**

- The provider must establish administrative, technical, and physical safeguards in compliance with HIPAA's Security Rule.
- Use of Direct Secure Messaging must be in accordance with each operator's responsibilities that relate directly to their job duties and qualifications.
- The user agrees to relinquish any Direct Secure Messaging access upon termination of their current business relationship.
- User names and passwords are strictly confidential and may not be disclosed or shared by anyone, including, but not limited to office staff. Please note that each practitioner must have their own account.

- The ordering physician/practitioner is solely responsible for transmitting electronic orders.
- Providers must ensure that passwords are changed periodically, no less than every 60 days.
- Providers must complete the annual verification process.

**For questions regarding Direct Secure Messaging or to activate your account:**

**CMAP Practitioners** please contact 1-855-269-2032 Monday-Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM or email [ct.direct@ct.gov](mailto:ct.direct@ct.gov).

**MEDS Providers** please contact SES at 1-888-470-9913 ext. 1 Monday-Friday from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM or email [ctmeds@secureexesolutions.com](mailto:ctmeds@secureexesolutions.com).

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**Distribution:** This policy transmittal is being distributed to providers of the Connecticut Medical Assistance Program by HP Enterprise Services.

**Responsible Unit:** DSS, Division of Health Services, Medical Policy and Regulations, Colleen Ryan, Medical Policy at (860) 424-5195

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