

Insurance eligibility headaches expected with ACA

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(HealthDay)—With the influx of newly insured patients under the Affordable Care Act, physician practices should be prepared to spend even more time verifying coverage, according to an article published Jan. 2 in *Medical Economics*.

According to the article, H. Christopher Zaenger, C.H.B.C., a consultant with Z Management Group in Barrington, Ill., suggests that practices should copy all the information on patients' identification cards. For those who do not yet have cards, he says, practices should get the patients' application paperwork and the plans they are joining "by specific name and number." The Qualified Health Plans website can be used to verify the coverage and effective date.

Furthermore, the article notes that the verification process will differ depending on if a patient's plan is run by the state or federal government. Additionally, practices should be prepared to "continually" educate patients about their payment responsibilities.

"Experts say that practices should prepare to spend even more time verifying coverage, and they must consider using cash reserves to float payments for the next few months," writes Donna Marbury, the author of the article.

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