**Questions & Answers**

*October 2014 Authorization Quality Call*

**Reminders**

1. For clarification, no due process is needed if the issue is a reduction of a particular service connected condition, not any reduction or severance that would not affect the overall payment?

*That is correct; if there is no change to the overall payment, due process is not required.*

1. Comment: In regards to the topic for canceling EP 600’s and establishing a new one with a new date of claim (DOC) for the new letter being sent out, we can change the DOC for an EP in VBMS. SHARE does not allow us to change a DOC to a future date, but VBMS does.

*It will be necessary to cancel the EP in SHARE and re-establish with the correct date of claim.*

1. If the claim is CEST in VBMS and worked in VBMS in the evening, the letter on the claim cannot be changed in VBMS. The date of claim on the EP 600 would be the day it was CEST but the letter would be the next day. Would this be an error?

*If the date on the letter does not match the claim establishment date in SHARE, this would be considered an error.*

1. An incorrect effective date was assigned in a prior rating which has already been finalized. A clear and unmistakable error (CUE) was found in the prior rating with regard to the effective date assigned. Is a proposal/due process notice required before action can be taken to correct the effective date?

*If the effective date affects payment, due process would be necessary. If there is no change to the payment, due process is not required.*

**Uploading Documents for Paperless Claims**

1. Does the manual require VSR’s to upload documents in VBMS? I have not seen this change and only aware that VSR’s are to send the documents to scanning.

*General guidance on storing items in the electronic folder may be found in* M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart ii, 3.C.8.g. *The references cited during the call were VBMS Job Aids; however, prior guidance on this subject has been provided to the field in Transformation Initiative & Pilot (TIP) Sheets. While the subject of uploading documents for paperless claims may not be fully addressed in the manual, instructions to do so are provided in other authoritative documents, such as TIP Sheets.*

**Recent Manual Changes**

1. Will errors be cited for not attempting a phone call for those scenarios which the MR guides us to use the telephone?

*No, quality errors will not be cited at this time. However, ROs are expected to follow the MR guidance, and make good faith efforts to undertake telephone development, whenever possible. Telephone development is the preferred method of development and will help reduce VA processing times.*

1. In regards to the manual change Q&A, Attorney Fee: if the Veteran and Attorney agree to the waiver of the appeal period for release of funds, do we still need to wait the 60 days before releasing them?

*Yes, based on the new guidance provided in M21-1MR,I.3.C.17.a, the appeal period cannot be waived. Therefore, any withheld funds are not to be released until the 60 day appeal period has fully expired or is finally decided, whichever is later.*

How does a claimant waive the time period for the private attorney/agent to be paid? Do we have to wait the 60 day time period even if the attorney and the claimant have requested the time be waived?

*As indicated above, a claimant cannot waive the 60 day time period. Therefore, any withheld funds are not to be released until the 60 day appeal period has fully expired or is finally decided, whichever is later*.

**Quality Review & Consistency Topics**

1. Do you need us to update SHAREPOINT and send an email with the same information regarding who needs QRT Challenge Training?

*If the QRT Contact list is updated, we will be able to recognize new hires. If a RO has a special request for someone to attend who is not a new hire or if the RO wants to make sure that we know about certain QRT who need to attend, please send an email to make sure we are aware.*

1. Guidance would be appreciated on local IQR’s as to performing reviews on EP 600’s in conjunction with a rating decision. Should this be a non-rating review or a rating review?

*When reviewing an EP 600, the Individual Quality Review should be done as a non-rating authorization review.*

1. Are the TIP sheets considered a basis/reference for an error call?

*Tip sheets should only be considered a basis/reference for an error call in regard to S1 errors. All other errors should be supported by a manual reference or regulation.*

1. With regard to uploading documents into VBMS, would it be considered an S1 error if the individual failed to do so?

*No. Currently, not uploading documents into VBMS would be considered a comment and sent back to the VSR for correction. S1 errors do not consider uploading of documents in VBMS.*

1. Since the June and July RVSR consistency study results had to be recalculated, when should we expect the results to be provided?

*June and July results went out the end of October.*

1. When citing errors, we are instructed to only use manual references and not local policy. Does this include VSCM directives?

*In reference to VSCM directives, if it is a local VSCM directive then it would be considered local policy and would therefore not be used in citing of errors. If it is a directive from a VSCM call then it can be used to support an error.*

**Reconsideration Discussion**

1. The NCC should be required to gather all necessary information and then there would be no development necessary.

*Having all information on the front-end would be ideal; however, it is the responsibility of the office processing the claim to ensure that all information is of record prior to making a final decision.*

**Other**

1. When we come across a file where a dependency claim was processed through RBPS incorrectly, what are the expectations of the Regional Offices?

*Per the* [*RBPS TIP Sheet*](http://vbacodmoint1.vba.va.gov/bl/21/Transformation/docs/Procedures%20for%20Handling%20Rules%20Based%20Processing%20System%20%28RBPS%29%20Claims.doc)*, any errors, including same-sex benefits errors, discovered in claims processed through RBPS should be corrected.*