



Frequently Asked Questions



What is an NPI?

NPIs are unique identifiers used by providers to bill Medicare and Medicaid for services they provide. They are currently the only identifiers allowed by the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS).



Why should I obtain an NPI?

NPI numbers are the only numbering system currently approved for providers like APRNs to bill Medicare and Medicaid.

How do I obtain an NPI?

Applications for NPIs can be found through CMS' website [here](#). 



Why is it important to have an NPI to track the care that nurses provide?

As nurses, we know that our care is a crucial component of healthcare quality and health outcomes. Yet an RN's time and expertise are now completely invisible to the systems that pay for patient care. As a result, the value of RN care to the system is not quantified. Nursing care should be counted! Tracking that care with an NPI is an essential first step in changing how health systems and other practitioners view nurses and the work that they do. The ultimate goal is changing healthcare reimbursement to account for the role of RN care.



What is the cost for an NPI?

There is no cost to obtain and maintain an NPI.



How long do I keep my NPI?

The NPI lasts throughout your professional career and travels with you from position to position. Make sure to update the NPI system when you change employers.



How do I obtain more information from ANA on NPI?

To obtain more information please contact ANA's policy team at gova@ana.org.



Frequently Asked Questions



Who administers the NPI process and why?

The process is administered by CMS. Congress passed legislation requiring CMS to create a unique identifier for providers and the result of this was the NPI. CMS requires NPIs to process Medicare payments, and to support data analysis for the Medicare program.



Do private payers require NPI numbers?

Most private payers require NPI numbers for billing, but it is not a legal requirement.



Does the NPI cross state lines?

Yes. NPIs are nationwide and cross state lines.



I am an APRN and bill under my practice/hospital NPI, why should I get an NPI?

Unless one has an NPI, it is impossible to track the work you do versus the work done by other clinicians in the practice. Additionally, if one chooses to start their own practice they would need an NPI to bill Medicare and Medicaid for reimbursement.



I am an RN and I don't bill separately, why should I get an NPI?

It is true that RNs do not currently bill, but we believe that nurses are not paid appropriately for the work they perform. There is currently no way to track all the work that nurses do to show their full value, but by registering for an NPI we can start building the data to show the impact of nurses.



Other organizations are requesting that I use my NCSBN ID. Does this conflict with an NPI?

This does not conflict with ANA's recommendation of obtaining an NPI. Key organizations using NCSBN IDs are doing important research that can also help show the value of nursing. They are using this ID as all nurses are automatically given an NCSBN ID. The NPI was developed specifically for billing and reimbursement purposes, which is an area of priority focus for ANA advocacy. Both identifiers are important to changing how systems value and reimburse nurses.