

Outline of the Act for the Partial Revision of the Health Insurance Act for proper and efficient operation of the medical insurance system

Purpose of revision

In order to achieve the proper and efficient operation of the medical insurance system, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) will establish a system in which insurers integrally manage information on eligibility of insured persons; a medical informatization support fund with the aim of providing medical institutions with assistance for the appropriate implementation of said system; a system to perform interlinked analyses of and to provide information on medical/long-term care benefits and a framework in which municipalities integrally provide both health services and care prevention activities, modify the requirements for dependents, and take measures for reforming the structure of the social insurance medical fee payment fund.

Outline of revision

1. Introduction of online eligibility check 【Health Insurance Act, National Health Insurance Act, Act on Assurance of Medical Care for Elderly People and Mariners Insurance Act】

- The government plans to stipulate ways to check health insurance eligibility in law before introducing the online verification system. As insurance numbers are allocated to individuals instead of households, the revised law protects personal information by prohibiting medical institutions and other relevant organizations from asking insured persons to disclose their insurance numbers for any purpose other than the administration of the health insurance program (restriction on request for disclosure).

2. Establish a fund to help medical institutions adopt information and communication technology (ICT) in their services such as electronic medical records and online verification system for

insurance eligibility 【Act on Promotion of Comprehensive Securing of Medical Care and Nursing Care in Areas】

3. Interlinked analysis of NDB and long-term care DB 【Act on Assurance of Medical Care for Elderly People, Long-Term Care Insurance Act and Health Insurance Act】

- It is allowed to perform interlinked analysis of National Database of Health Insurance Claims and Specific Health Checkups of Japan(NDB) and Comprehensive long-term care database(long-term care DB), and rules for providing research institutions with access to these databases for promoting their use in the public interest (preliminary review by the Council, the obligation to manage information, inspections by the national government, etc.) will be established. (Similar rules will be established for the DPC database.)

4. Integrated provision of healthcare services and long-term care prevention activities for the elderly【Act on Assurance of Medical Care for Elderly People, Long-Term Care Insurance Act and National Health Insurance Act】

- The revised law specifies the roles of the national government, the wider-area union and municipalities to enable municipalities to integrate medical care services for the elderly aged 75 or older and community support services under the long-term care insurance system. Provisions will also be stipulated to allow municipalities to have integrated access to necessary information such as elderly residents' medical records, results of health checkups and data on nursing care. .

5. Review of requirements for dependents and more appropriate management of eligibility for the national health insurance system 【Health Insurance Act, Mariners Insurance Act, National Pension Act and National Health Insurance Act】

- (1) Some requirements for dependents of employees' insurance are exempted and a provision that a dependent shall, in principle, live in Japan will be added.
- (2) The revised law allows municipalities to ask the parties involved for submitting information materials or filing reports on persons' health insurance status (whether they are covered or uncovered) as well as managing the data on persons covered by the national health insurance program.

6. Strengthened functions of examination and payment bodies 【Social Insurance Medical Fee Payment Foundation Act and National Health Insurance Act】

- (1) As for the social insurance medical fee payment fund (the Payment Fund), the authority of the Director Generals of Branch Offices is integrated into the Headquarters to strengthen its adjustment function.
- (2) An operation to analyze data relating to medical insurance information is added (for both the Payment Fund/the Federation of National Health Insurance Associations).
- (3) A basic philosophy of examinations conducted by examination and payment bodies will be set forth such as fair and neutral examinations for the purpose of improving the quality of medical care (for both the Payment Fund/the Federation of National Health Insurance Associations).

7. Others

- The revision stipulates necessary provisions that prevent people from making double payments on insurance premiums both for the National Health Insurance and the Social Health Insurance programs. Such cases, for instance, occur when employers who have not provided employer-sponsored health insurance to their workers start offering a scheme, and the employees have to pay their premiums for the new program retroactively. 【National Health Insurance Act】

Effective date

April 1, 2020 (However, the day specified by Cabinet Order within a period not exceeding two years from the date of promulgation for 1., October 1, 2019 for 2., October 1, 2020 for 3. and 6(2) and (3) (April 1, 2022 in the case of some provisions), the date of promulgation for 5(2) and 7, April 1, 2021 for 6(1).