



QTSO MEMORANDUM

MEMO

NUMBER: 2023-024

TO: QIES State Coordinators

CC: CMS Central and Regional Office Contacts

FROM: QIES Technical Support Office

DATE: MAY 5, 2023

SUBJECT: CMS DATA CONNECTION UPGRADES AT STATE AGENCIES

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), Center for Clinical Standards and Quality (CCSQ) in conjunction with the CMS Office of Information Technology (OIT) is implementing upgrades to the current CMS provided data connections at all state agencies. These data connections/circuits interconnect to the CMS network and are used for the Quality Improvement and Evaluation System including but not limited to the Assessment Submission and Processing (ASAP) system, Certification and Survey Provider Enhanced Reports (CASPER) and the Automated Survey Processing Environment (ASPEN) system. This effort will improve network performance and is a required step in preparation for the broader implementation of the Internet Quality Improvement and Evaluation System (iQIES). Click the following link for more information.

<https://www.cms.gov/medicare/quality-safety-oversight-general-information/iqies>

Services are provided by **Verizon** and funded by **CMS** under a Federal Government contract.

Verizon will facilitate the data circuit upgrades in conjunction with the CMS Office of Information Technology (OIT). A Verizon Project Manager will coordinate the data circuit upgrades with applicable state agency contacts and provide any necessary technical direction and specific requirements to ensure proper service delivery and adherence to security requirements including Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS).

Typical upgrades may require the following depending on the location:

- Existing Verizon managed devices will remain in place
- Limited new equipment installation – *varies by location*
- New building cabling – *varies by location and may be provided by state agency or Verizon/CMS*
- **Required:** Installation of Verizon/CMS provided analog line (Plain Old Telephone Service / POTS)

This may already be installed depending on the location and connects to the existing Verizon managed Port Authority modem which is a secure device specifically for Federal Government Networks that is FIPS 140-2 compliant.

It is important that local state agency site contacts are identified who can assist with building access including telco closets, electrical rooms, data rooms and telco demarcation (DEMARC) rooms. Local site contacts may need to interface with technicians and engineers from Verizon, Verizon contractors and Local Exchange Carriers (LEC). Technicians may require access to install equipment, cabling and provision services depending on the location specific technical requirements. 2

The following Verizon Project Managers (PM) will coordinate and schedule discussions as necessary with applicable state agency site contacts. The PM will provide the necessary technical and installation requirements as well as coordinate technician dispatches. Please be prepared to receive correspondence and/or phone calls from:

Verizon Project Managers

Barbara DiSantis, barbara.a.disantis@verizon.com

Joe Montilla, jovencio.c.montilla@verizon.com

General questions about this notice can be directed to:

CMS Contacts:

CCSQ/iQIES - Wilson Banga, Wilson.Banga@cms.hhs.gov

CCSQ/iQIES - Bryon Dedmond, Bryon.Dedmond@cms.hhs.gov

Office of Information Technology (OIT) - Patrick Knickman,

DIN_Datacomm@cms.hhs.gov

NOTE: This memo is not applicable to the State of TX, CA, FL, PA, NY, WV, IL, OH, NJ, and MD.

If you have any questions, please contact the QTSO Help Desk at igies@cms.hhs.gov or 1 (888) 477-7876.