Implementation of CAQH CORE Phase III Operating Rules in NCTracks

The Council for Affordable Quality Healthcare (CAQH) is a nonprofit alliance of health plans and trade associations. The Committee on Operating Rules for information Exchange (CORE) is an initiative through CAQH to promote streamlining and ease of use for physicians and hospitals to access eligibility, benefits and claim information for their patients at the point of care. Implementation of the CAQH CORE operating rules is a mandate of the Affordable Care Act. (For more information about CAQH CORE, see their website at www.caqh.org/.)

System changes associated with Phases I and II of the CAQH CORE standards were implemented in NCTracks in March 2014, including enhancements to Recipient Eligibility Inquiry and Claim Status, as well as a new communication channel for trading partners. For more information regarding the Phase I and II enhancements, see the March 24 announcement.

NCTracks is implementing the next phase of CAQH CORE rules, Phase III, which will provide access to more data and increase the transactions available via CORE's connectivity methodology, as summarized below.

835 Infrastructure Rule

Connectivity

NCTracks will now be able to support the CAQH CORE Connectivity Rule for transmission of the 835 and 820 X12 transactions, along with the 270/271 and 276/277 X12 transactions, which were implemented in Phases I and II.

In order for a trading partner to request an 835 or 820 X12 transaction, the trading partner will need to submit a request to be authenticated through the CAQH CORE channel, and for NCTracks to identify the file requested (e.g. for which payment cycle and provider). The trading partner will be authenticated and the requested files identified and sent.

Existing delivery channel functionality will continue to be operational, including delivery of the paper remittances to the provider Message Center Inbox and delivery of X12 files to the MoveIt folders.

Retransmitting X12 835 and 820 Transactions

New functionality for trading partners provisioned with CAQH CORE roles will include a process for retransmitting 835 and 820 X12 transactions. A request can be made through the CAQH CORE delivery channel and the 835/820 X12 transaction for the cycle requested will be retransmitted directly from the system. The requests will be serviced real-time and sent via SOAP or MIME (encryption protocols) directly to the requesting provider.

If the 835 or 820 X12 transaction files are already generated for the requested Checkwrite cycle, a copy of the file will be sent to the requesting trading partner real-time. If the 835 or 820 X12 transaction files were not generated as part of the regular Checkwrite cycle, the request will not be fulfilled (the requested file will not returned).

Note: NCTracks will store 835 and 820 X12 transaction files for 90 days. If a request is made for a file that is older than 90 days, the request will not be fulfilled (the requested file will not be available to retransmit).

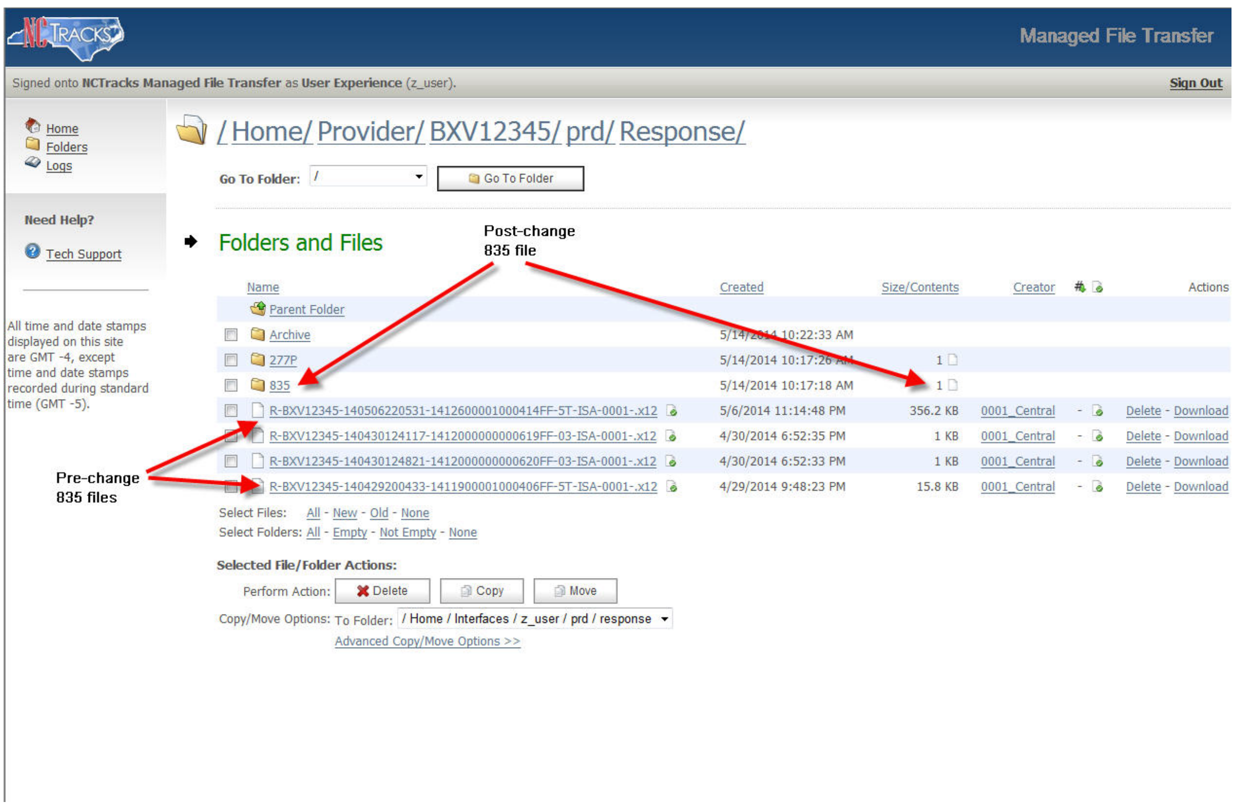
Unbundling of the X12 Transactions

To support CORE rules functionality, NCTracks will generate the 277P, 820, 834, and 835 X12 transactions by provider number (NPI/Atypical ID) rather than by TSN, as it is done today.

Mailbox Folder Restructuring

The electronic mailboxes' response folder structure for the 277P, 820, 834, and 835 X12 transactions will be modified to create subfolders that support the efficient storage of 'unbundled' files. Some of the changes to the mail box folder structure will need to be addressed in each trading partner's system. There are no changes to the inbound mailboxes. All FTP processes will continue to be the same. The changes impact trading partner's outbound folder structure only.

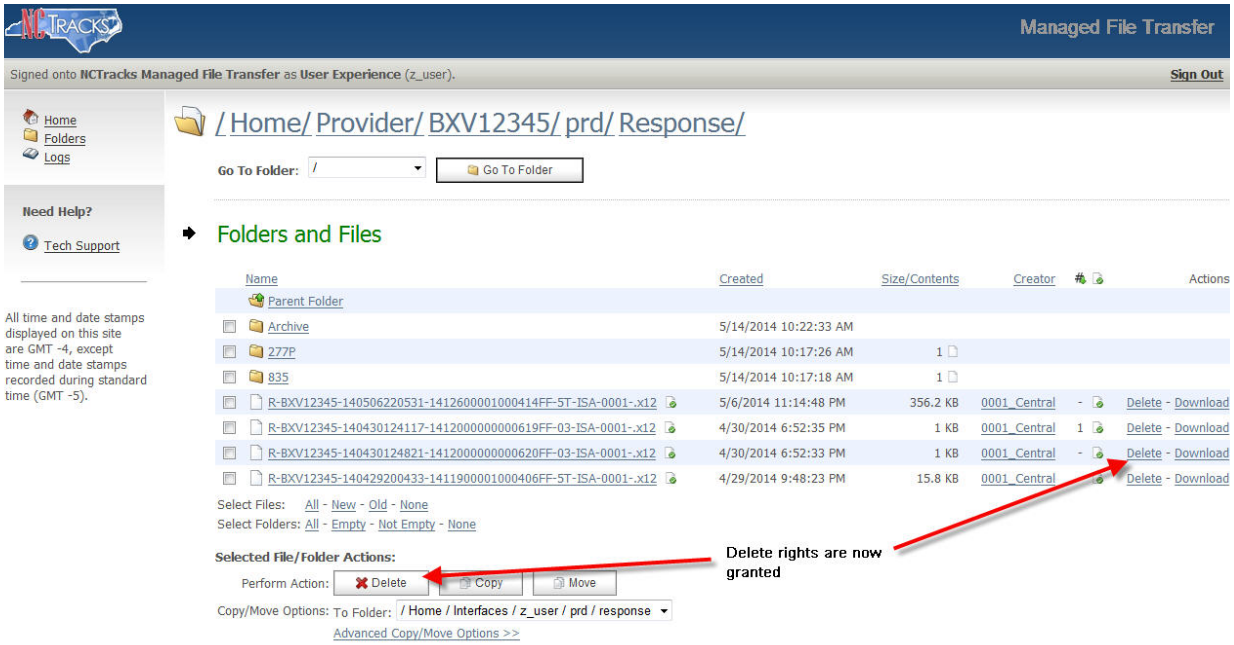
To enhance CAQH CORE functionality and facilitate the efficient use of NCTrack's folder structure the default folder (mailbox folder) will become the root folder when signing on through the FTPS or SFTP interfaces. The visible files and folders in the default folder will be those for transactions that are provisioned to the trading partner (if not provisioned for a transaction, the transaction folder will not be in the mailbox folder). See example below:



Note: This enhancement may require trading partners to modify their systems.

Mailbox File Delete Functionality

Functionality has been developed to allow providers the ability to delete files from their mailboxes. Trading partners will be able to copy, move, download, and delete files. The copy, move, download, and delete commands are located at the bottom and side of the Response Folder page. In the example below, the Response Folder page contains separate folders for the 835, 277P, 820, and 834. All other transactions, like the 999, TA1, F-File, 271, and 277 files, will be located inside the mailbox folder (not all trading partners will have all of the folders listed, as in the example below):



File Name Convention

File names in the mailbox subfolders are changing from this convention:

"R-" & mailboxID & "-" & dateTime & "-" & fileID & "-" & fileType & "-ISA-0001-.x12"

To this convention:

"R-" & mailboxID & "-" & dateTime & "-" & fileID & "-" **& Provider Number &**"-"& fileType & "-ISA-0001-.X12"

Note: This enhancement may require trading partners to modify their systems.

Trading Partner Roles

There will be a new 'Trading Partner Roles Page' in the secure Provider Portal for user provisioning associated with CAQH CORE. Any existing CAQH CORE transaction roles will need to be re-established using the new Trading Partner Roles Page.

The Phase III CORE rules add 835 and 820 X12 transactions. These transactions will be available to select for transmission in the CAQH CORE delivery channel along with the 270/271 and 276/277 X12 transactions implemented in Phases I and II. The "unbundling" enhancement will be implemented for trading partners that are not using the CAQH CORE delivery channel but are authorized to receive 277P, 820, 834, and 835 X12 transactions (see Unbundling of the X12 Transactions and Mailbox Folder Restructuring sections above).

Companion Guides

As with Phases I and II, the Companion Guides for the 835 and 820 X12 transactions will be updated to reflect the format of the CAQH CORE Master Companion Guide Template. The Connectivity Guide will be updated to reflect all applicable infrastructure changes implemented with CAQH CORE Phase III.

Batch Acknowledgements

Trading partners who are provisioned to receive 835 and/or 820 X12 transactions must return an X12 999 Implementation Acknowledgement for each Functional Group of 835/820 X12 transaction requested. These will indicate that the Functional Group was accepted, accepted with errors, or rejected, and whether each included 835/820 X12 transaction set was either accepted, accepted with errors, or rejected.

NCTracks will be able to accept and process X12 999 Acknowledgement transactions for a Functional Group of 835 X12 transactions. A workflow is being implemented to resolve the rejected X12 999 Acknowledgements.

CARC RARC Rule

NCTracks will review the existing CARC and RARC usage and map them to the CAQH CORE identified minimum set of four defined Business Scenarios with a maximum set of CAQH CORE required code combinations that can be applied to convey details of the claim denial or payment to the provider.

Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) Enrollment Data Rule

NCTracks will modify user pages of the EFT enrollment process on the secure Provider Portal to match the identified maximum set of standard data elements for EFT enrollment. This rule also outlines a flow and format for paper and electronic collection of the data elements. Some of the labels for existing fields will change to match those identified in the CORE data standards. However, existing providers will not need to make any changes to their EFT enrollment.

Electronic Remittance Advice (ERA) Enrollment Data Rule

Similar to EFT Enrollment Data Rule, NCTracks will modify user pages of the ERA enrollment process on the secure Provider Portal to match the identified maximum set of standard data elements for ERA enrollment. Some of the labels for existing fields will change to match those identified in the CORE data standards. However, existing providers will not need to make any changes to their ERA enrollment.

EFT/ERA Reassociation Rule

With the implementation of CAQH CORE Phase III, Trading partners will have the data needed to reconcile 835 and 820 X12 transactions with their bank statements. Additional data located in the TRN segment will be included on the EFT transaction sent to the bank by NCTracks. The bank will, in turn, add that information to the payment file that is received by the provider. Today, TRN01, TRN02, and TRN03 are populated but not sent to the bank. The CORE rule enhancement will require TRN01, TRN02, TRN03 as well as TRN04 to be populated and included on the EFT transaction and the 835/820 transaction. TRN04 is information that will differentiate 835 X12 transactions from 820 X12 transactions.

More information is forthcoming, including testing specifications, etc. The Connectivity Guide will be published after trading partner testing is complete.

For questions, contact the NCTracks Call Center at 1-800-688-6696 and ask for the EDI Help Desk.