

Washington State Orthopaedic Association Newsletter

December 2009

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SEASONS GREETINGS!

On behalf of the WSOA we wish you and your families a very Happy Holiday and peace for the New Year!

AAOS News

How to Get Paid For Consulting When Medicare Eliminates Consultation Codes January 1, 2010

The CMS has released its final 2010 Physicians Fee Schedule. One of the most significant changes was the elimination of payment for consultation codes as of January 1, 2010.

This does not mean you can no longer do consultative work, it just means that you will have to bill these services differently than you do now. Here are the facts regarding this new ruling and the potential impact on your practice.

1. Consultation codes 99241-99245 (outpatient/office) and 99251-99255 (inpatient) have been eliminated effective January 1, 2010. Telehealth consultation G-codes (G0425-G0427) will not be eliminated.
2. Starting January 1, 2010, CPT codes for new (99201-99205) or established (99211-99215) patients should be used to replace consultations in the office/outpatient setting.
3. Starting January 1, 2010, CPT codes in the inpatient hospital setting (99221-99223) should be used to replace inpatient consultation codes (99251-99255), and for nursing facility consultations use codes (99304-99306).
4. To distinguish the difference between the admitting physician of record from the consultants for initial hospital inpatient and nursing facility admissions, CMS will develop a modifier. Currently, modifier "AI" is for principal physician of record, however Medicare has not finalized the modifier to be used for consultations.
5. Medicare states that its changes are budget neutral. RVUs for all E/M codes have been increased in an attempt to offset the fees lost from the elimination of consultation codes. The increase in E/M payments is approximately 6% for outpatient/office codes and 2% for inpatient codes above 2009 levels.

An important note regarding commercial or private insurance: No information has been released by other third party payers regarding payment for consultation codes as of yet. However, if a patient has Medicare as a secondary payer, a decision will need to be made by the physician as to how you will report the consultation. Any consultation claim filed with a commercial insurer such as Blue Cross or Aetna who is primary using the eliminated consultation codes when Medicare is secondary would result in a denial for the secondary claim by Medicare. In those instances where Medicare is secondary, you may want to consider using the new guidelines as stated above for reporting consultation codes.

WSOA Board Meeting Minutes

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Residents

Did you know your WSOA membership is complimentary?

[Join today!](#)

You'll receive complimentary registration to all WSOA CME/Annual meetings.

Call our office for more information 206-956-3642

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One more note: If you have not updated your enrollment information with Medicare since November 2003, you must do so by April 5, 2010. Although enrolled in Medicare, many physicians who are eligible to refer Medicare beneficiaries to other Medicare providers or suppliers for services do not have current enrollment records in Medicare. A current enrollment record is one that is in the Medicare provider enrollment, chain and ownership system (PECOS) and also contains the physician's national provider identifier (NPI).

Renew Your 2010 Membership Dues Online

Simply login to www.wsoa.org and pay your 2010 Membership dues conveniently and securely.

Physicians Assistants Join WSOA today!

The WSOA Board of Directors has approved the membership of physician assistants in the WSOA. Please encourage your PA staff members to join. Go to www.wsoa.org and download the application. Fax completed applications to 206-441-5863 or mail to WSOA, 2033 6th Ave. Suite 1100, Seattle, WA 98121

Supplier Sponsorships

As an ongoing effort to offer our members value added benefits, the WSOA is in the process of creating an on-line directory of medical suppliers. We will also be offering sponsorship opportunities in our monthly newsletter. Each monthly sponsor will receive article space to draw attention to their goods or services. Please feel free to pass this information on to suppliers you think might have an interest in this opportunity. For information contact Darla White at 206-956-3642 or email at ddw@wsma.org

Update Your Contact Information

The WSOA feels it is critical to be able to keep its members up to date on important issues affecting your practice and patient care. Please be sure your contact information is current with our office. You may email contact information updates to Darla White, WSOA Association Executive at ddw@WSMA.org.

In Memoriam

Please forward information regarding the passing of any WSOA members to Darla White at ddw@wsma.org so that we may share the information with your fellow colleagues.

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