

Internal Medicine Coding Alert

Physician Education: Use This Checklist to Develop an IPPE Template

Keep Medicare's 7 requirements at your internist's fingertips

The best way for you to remember the documentation requirements to correctly bill Medicare's initial preventive physical examination (IPPE), or "Welcome-to-Medicare visit," is to create a template, says **Susan Minchew Pincus, CPC, CHC**, an independent healthcare consultant in Atlanta.

What to do: Use this documentation checklist as your template or as a guide to help you develop your own.

To meet Medicare's guidelines for performing an IPPE, you should:

1. Document a medical, social and family history.
2. Use a nationally standardized tool to screen for depression.
3. Test the patient's ability to function safely by himself.
4. Perform a thorough physical exam.
5. Administer or order an electrocardiogram (EKG).
6. Use the exam's results to educate, counsel and refer the patient.
7. Write a plan that details other Medicare-covered screening or preventive services the patient may need.