

Internal Medicine Coding Alert

Reader Question: 'Health Coach' Services: Preventive Codes To Be Applicable?

Question: I am looking for CPT® or HCPCS codes for health coach services that would be billable to insurance carrier (including Medicare). What would you recommend?

Maine Subscriber

Answer: It's difficult to pinpoint the best code without knowing what you mean by "health coach." There are no codes in CPT® or HCPCS that specifically reference health coaching. Here are three sets of codes to consider, depending on the exact service(s) your provider is offering:

- Codes 99381-99387 (Initial comprehensive preventive medicine evaluation and management of an individual ...) or 99391-99397 (Periodic comprehensive preventive medicine reevaluation and management of an individual ...): These codes represent preventive medicine evaluation and management services for new and established patients. They include an age and gender appropriate medical history and exam, as well as counseling/anticipatory guidance/risk factor reduction interventions and the ordering of appropriate laboratory/diagnostic procedures.
- Codes 99401-99404 (Preventive medicine counseling ...): These essentially involve the preventive medicine counseling and/or risk factor reduction interventions referenced above without the corresponding history and exam.
- Codes 99487-99489 (Complex chronic care coordination services ...): These are new for 2013 and represent the work involved in various activities coordinating the patient's care during the course of a month. The codes are used for patients who have multiple chronic conditions and might be seeing several providers from different specialties on a regular basis. CPT® 2013 includes comprehensive instructions in its guidelines for when and how to report these codes.

If nothing else seems to fit, you might have to report 99499 (Unlisted evaluation and management service) with thorough documentation of the services.

Before submitting a claim, be sure you have a good understanding of what your provider is doing as a "health coach." Also ensure that the individual who is serving as a "health coach" is otherwise eligible to bill for his or her services as a provider with the payer. Then, if the codes listed above don't seem to apply, talk with your payer representative for suggestions.