

Optometry Coding & Billing Alert

News You Can Use: Medicare Nearly Doubles A-Scan Pay

CMS' Fee Schedule update increases reimbursement for several ophthalmic procedures

If Medicare's 2004 Physician Fee Schedule left you feeling shortchanged, a new CMS update may offer some good news: You'll now get double the fee that the original version of the fee schedule allotted for A-scans.

On Feb. 20, CMS released Transmittal 105, which corrects mistakes that existed in the original fee schedule. Most notably, Medicare nearly doubled the relative value units (RVUs) assigned to ophthalmic A-scans (76516, Ophthalmic biometry by ultrasound echography, A-scan). Both the nonfacility and facility practice expense RVUs rose from a mere 0.73 to a whopping 1.45. Based on the 2004 conversion factor of 37.3374, this represents a \$27 raise (unadjusted for location).

The following is a breakdown of the RVU changes -- mostly to ophthalmic radiology codes -- that affect optometrists: 