

Optometry Coding & Billing Alert

READER QUESTION ~ Turn to Medicare Web Site for LCD Search

Question: Where can I go to look up Medicare carriers- local coverage determinations? Also, is there an easy way to search a particular coverage topic on the Medicare site?

Georgia Subscriber

Answer: You should first try your individual carrier's Web site, but if you're looking for a quick reference to search and compare policies among multiple carriers, go to the Medicare coverage database on the Web:

www.cms.hhs.gov/mcd/search.asp.

The Web page walks you through several steps to meet your goal.

Step 1: Select whether you're looking for a national or a local coverage determination. If you choose local, you can search for articles and policies. Just check the boxes that apply.

Example: You select -local coverage,- -Policies (LMRP/LCD)- and -Final Policies Only.-

Step 2: Select a state or a contractor from the list provided. Then, scroll down and check off how you'd like to do your search.

For example, select Georgia from the list under -Geographic area.-

Step 3: You can search by keyword, ICD-9 code, CPT/HCPCS code, coverage topic, and effective dates. After you've typed in your criteria, click -search now- and wait for the results to pop up.

In this example, select -Keyword,- enter the term -intraocular lens,- and select -Entire document- and -Exact phrase.- This means you're searching Georgia carriers- final policies that include the term -intraocular lens.- Your search reveals five matches. You can scan through and click on the appropriate LCDs to get the information you need.