

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

CMS Makes 'Welcome' Concessions

CMS did agree to make a few changes to the "Welcome to Medicare" exam. The agency changed language in the exam's descriptor to clarify that doctors should be looking for "modifiable risk factors for disease," or conditions where early detection could make a huge difference.

Also, CMS agreed to remove the requirement that physicians seek information on a patient's work and travel history and social activities, keeping only questions about diet, alcohol, tobacco and drug use and physical activities. The final rule will spell out that doctors should be looking for risk factors for depression, not just actual depression.

Instead of using the National Coverage Determination process to make changes to the tests required in the WTM exam, CMS will simply require that covered tests must be recognized by "national medical professional organizations."