

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

HCPCS 2008: New Codes May Ease Lucentis Claims

And HCPCS now includes Supprelin LA code

Hot on the heels of the new CPT 2008 introduction, you've got more new codes to assign to your claims with the introduction of several HCPCS codes effective Jan. 1. Here's how the new codes break down by specialty:

Ophthalmology: The big news for ophthalmology coders is that you now have a code to report Lucentis (J2778). Gone will be the days of using unclassified codes J3490 (Unclassified drugs) or J3590 (Unclassified biologics) for this drug.

Oncology: HCPCS deletes previous panitumumab code C9235 and debuts new code J9303 (Panitumumab injection, 10 mg). -Panitumumab is a very useful drug and will be used a lot,- says **Barbara L. McAneny, MD, CEO of New Mexico Oncology Hematology Consultants Ltd.** in Albuquerque. -When drugs are new, they get average wholesale priced for a while, so CMS likes to get them specific codes ASAP. That hurts us in price, but forces private payers to acknowledge the drug as standard of care.-

Endocrinology: If you were frustrated with the lack of specificity when reporting Supprelin LA, you'll be able to abandon J3490 in favor of new code J9226 (Histrelin implant, Supprelin LA, 50 mg).

Urology: Because HCPCS introduced J9226, the existing histrelin implant code (J9225) will now have a new descriptor indicating that it specifically refers to Vantas.

Skin substitutes: In addition, HCPCS will make skin substitute coding easier with the debut of J7347 (Integra matrix), J7348 (Tissuemend) and J7349 (Primatrix).

-It's nice to have specific codes to attach to specific products,- says **Linda Martien, CPC, CPC-H, of National Healing Corporation.** -It's often more of a challenge to select the correct application codes, especially when coders don't understand the difference between allograft, xenograft, metabolically active, non-metabolically active, etc.-

Gastroenterology: You'll also gain specificity when coding claims for G-tube and J-tube equipment. HCPCS deletes B4086, which covered claims for both standard- or low-profile tubes. In its place, you'll be able to choose from B4087 (for standard tubes) and B4088 (low-profile tubes).

What's not there: If you were looking for a code to replace J3490 for Cardizem, Tiazac, sodium bicarbonate or Tensilon, you're not in luck this year.