

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

PHYSICIAN NOTES: Even Non-Insulin Dependent Diabetics May Qualify for Blood Glucose Testing Equipment Coverage

Plus: OIG alleges that a California oncologist fraudulently billed Medicare and other payers for up to \$1 million in injectible medications that he didn't administer.

Aiming to clear up confusion among practices that treat diabetic patients, CMS issued an informative MLN Matters article on April 16 that spelled out coverage information for blood glucose self-testing equipment and supplies.

Supplies include blood glucose monitors, blood glucose test strips, lancet devices and lancets, and glucose control solutions for checking the accuracy of testing equipment and test strips.

"Medicare Part B covers the same type of blood glucose testing supplies for people with diabetes whether or not they use insulin," the article noted. "However, the amount of supplies that are covered varies.

"For instance, insulin-dependent patients qualify for coverage of up to 100 test strips and lancets per month, whereas Medicare covers 100 test strips and lancets only every three months for non-insulin-dependent patients.

To guarantee coverage for your patients, the practitioner must write a valid prescription noting the items that should be dispensed and the quantity of items, the frequency of testing, whether the patient is insulin-treated, the physician's signature, the signature date, and the start date of the order (if it's different than the signature date).

To read the complete article, visit www.cms.gov/MLN MattersArticles/downloads/SE1008.pdf.