

## Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

### Quality Guidelines Paid Off For Chronic Patients

Your practice could see a reimbursement boost--but also more quality guidelines--if a new study garners attention from payors.

Researchers from the **RAND Corp.** and **UCLA** found better outpatient care improved health outcomes for non-elderly patients. Patients whose care followed treatment guidelines were likelier to maintain health and had better quality of life, according to the study, published in the February Health Affairs.

Researchers studied 963 adults from three states who had suffered from heart disease, asthma, emphysema or diabetes. They evaluated the care the patients received over a 30-month period based on 120 measures of medical care they took from previous studies and panels of medical experts.

All of the patients declined in health. Patients who received better quality care experienced the smallest decline in health, delaying some of the effects of aging, researchers said. In particular, patients who received better quality care were better able to perform activities involving exertion.