

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

READER QUESTION: Avoid 99339 for Phone Call

Question: Our doctor spent a long time on the phone with a patient's son discussing the patient's chronic problems. We billed 99339 (Individual physician supervision of a patient [patient not present] in home, domiciliary or rest home...). Is that correct?

Answer: Your payer will probably not accept 99339 for this. You should use 99339 to describe the work a doctor provides on a regular basis while performing frequent complex supervision services to a patient in a home, domiciliary or rest home including:

- regular physician development and/or revision of care plans
- review of subsequent reports of patient status
- review of related laboratory and other studies
- communication (including telephone calls) for purposes of assessment or care decisions with healthcare professional(s), family member(s), surrogate decision-maker(s) (e.g., legal guardians), and/or key caregiver(s) involved in a patient's care
- integration of new information into the medical treatment plan and/or adjustment of medical therapy.
- Therefore, this code will not justify your physician's time on the phone with the patient's son. Because Medicare does not reimburse for phone calls, you probably won't be able to collect for the phone time.