

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

REIMBURSEMENT: Medicare Issues New Smoking Cessation Codes

But acupuncture codes won't be covered

If you're gearing up to provide smoking-cessation counseling to Medicare beneficiaries, two new codes will prove useful.

The **Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services** introduced two new smoking cessation counseling codes: G0375 (...three to 10 minutes) and G0376 (...greater than 10 minutes.) These codes are retroactive to March 22, when the smoking cessation demonstration began.

The July update to the Physician Fee Schedule also adds RVUs for acupuncture codes 97810-97814, but stressed that Medicare still won't cover them. The RVUs are just there for the convenience of the community. Also, CMS changed virtual colonoscopy code 0066T to status code "N," with zero RVUs. Stent placement codes 0075T-0076T now have status "C," meaning carrier-priced.

In addition, CMS changed contrast agent codes A4643-A4647 and intravenous immune globulin code J1564 to non-covered Status "I" and injection codes Q9941-Q9957 to non-covered Status "E." The agency also changed the bilateral surgery status indicators for a number of codes.

CMS touted the new smoking cessation codes, and other changes, on its May 10 physician Open Door Forum (ODF). Among the other changes that CMS highlighted in the ODF:

1. Beneficiaries will soon be receiving letters about the Medicare prescription drug program that takes effect next year, but more information won't be available until the fall.
2. Medicare will be providing funding directly to physicians and hospitals that take care of undocumented aliens, under Section 1011 of the Medicare Modernization Act.
3. CMS has sent out a letter to providers about how to apply for a National Provider Identifier (NPI) number, and it's also online at www.cms.hhs.gov/hipaa/hipaa2/npi_provider.asp. [There are three ways to apply for an NPI via a Web-based application that will go online May 23, using a paper application that will be available July 1 or through a provider organization or association.](#)
4. The Medicare replacement drug demonstration will end on Dec. 31, but there's still plenty of money available for beneficiaries to enroll and obtain drugs that wouldn't normally be covered before then.