

Eli's Rehab Report

Reader Question: Count On 'Consecutive' To Determine A Therapy Week

You can still skip days when necessary, though.

Question: Our therapists aren't on the same page when it comes to defining what makes a therapy week for patients receiving Part A services under Medicare. Some think the week starts on the day of admission and runs through Day 7 while others say the week doesn't have to be consecutive. Which theory is correct?

Answer: The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** took up this point in an Open Door Forum, saying that a therapy week is "seven consecutive days starting with the day of admission." Therefore, if your patient is admitted on Monday, her therapy week would run Monday through Sunday.

However, **Pauline Franko, PT, MCSP**, with **Encompass Consulting & Education** in Tamarac, Fla encourages practices to start their therapy week with the day of evaluation.

Example: You evaluate the patient on Tuesday and write your plan for five days each week (seven-day period). "You can see the patient on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, then skip Saturday and Sunday and pick back up with Monday to complete the established frequency," Franko says.

If you wanted to see the patient on Saturday, you'd then need to miss Monday so that you are compliant with your plan to provide therapy for five out of seven days that week, Franko notes.

The bottom line: Your goal is to stick to the seven consecutive days -- whether you start from the date of evaluation or the date of admission. The clock will start on that first day and run straight through, Franko says.