

Eli's Rehab Report

Speech Spotlight: Navigate Recent Tweaks to SLP CPTs

Plus: Practice expense RVUs win some, lose some.

Don't let small, but important changes pass you by. The speech-language pathology specialty saw a few changes to CPT® coding interpretation.

New: SLPs can now bill 92526 (Treatment of swallowing dysfunction and/or oral function for feeding) and 97532 (Development of cognitive skills to improve attention, memory, problem solving [includes compensatory training], direct [one-on-one] patient contact, each 15 minutes) on the same day, points out **Nancy Swigert, MA, CCC-SLP, BRS-S**, director of speech-language pathology & respiratory care at **Central Baptist Hospital** in Lexington, KY. "This was a good change as some patients need both types of intervention."

Proceed with caution, though. You should not use both codes to describe activities in the same session. An example of when coding both would be appropriate: "Some patients might receive dysphagia treatment and then in the same day receive cognitive therapy for a cognitive-communicative disorder," Swigert explains.

Provider Neutrality Language Hits Speech

There was also a change in the wording of the codes for professional interpretation of flexible endoscopic evaluation of swallowing (FEES), Swigert notes. "The word 'physician' was removed, meaning that an SLP can bill for interpretation."

As mentioned in the previous article on the cover page, the **American Medical Association** made a widespread effort across all CPT® codes to clarify that more than just a physician can bill CPT® codes. In your 2013 CPT® book, you'll see a blue triangle next to codes 92613, 92615 and 92617, indicating a revision from 2012.

Important: SLPs may bill for the interpretation only if they did not bill for doing the FEES procedure, Swigert stresses. "This is a good change for SLPs who might perform the procedure with another medical professional actually passing the scope. Some SLPs perform the FEES as a team with a physician."

There is no other major news for SLPs regarding 2013 CPT® changes, but keep your eyes peeled for 2014. "The Health Care Committee is working on developing four new evaluation procedure codes," according to Swigert.

Get a Quick View of RVUs

Several speech codes did see some significant changes in relative value units for Medicare payment. "RVU changes have occurred -- all within Practice Expense," confirms **Mark Kander**, director of health care regulatory analysis for the **American Speech-Language-Hearing Association**. "This is the final year of the four-year transition to the new PE values."

