

Psychiatry Coding & Reimbursement Alert

You Be the Coder: Mere Presence of Technician isn't Enough to Warrant 96119

Question: Recently, in our practice we performed neuropsychological testing. The technician was present during the encounter, but the testing was computer-based. Since the technician was present, I am not too sure whether to report the encounter with 96119 or report it as a computer-based testing with 96120. What should I do?

Delaware Subscriber

Answer: You should look at 96119 (Neuropsychological testing [e.g., Halstead-Reitan Neuropsychological Battery, Wechsler Memory Scales and Wisconsin Card Sorting Test], with qualified health care professional interpretation and report, administered by technician, per hour of technician time, face-to-face) when the testing was administered by your technician. You report 96120 (Neuropsychological testing [e.g., Wisconsin Card Sorting Test], administered by a computer, with qualified health care professional interpretation and report) when the test is computer-based.

Code 96120 should be reserved for situations where the computerized testing is unassisted by a provider or a technician other than the installation of programs or tests and checking to ensure the patient is able to complete the tests. If greater levels of interaction are required, though the test may be computer-based, then the technician code (96119) should be used.

So, check the level of involvement of your technician in the testing during the encounter and report the appropriate code.