

Long-Term Care Survey Alert

Medicare Reimbursement: MEDICARE TO PAY FOR E-STIM WOUND TREATMENT

Wound coverage is about to improve for residents with difficult-to-treat ulcers.

Under a new national coverage decision, Medicare will pay for electrical stimulation as an adjunctive therapy for four types of chronic nonhealing wounds. Providers have lobbied for the national coverage policy for many years. Currently local Medicare contractors decide whether to pay for e-stim treatments on a case-by-case basis.

Therapists deliver electrical stimulation through electrodes placed directly on the skin close to the wound, which appears to promote healing.

The types of wounds Medicare will cover once the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** issues a coverage policy to implement the national coverage decision are: pressure ulcers (stages III and IV only), arterial ulcers, venous stasis ulcers and diabetic ulcers. Read the full memo on the new coverage at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/coverage/8b3-ii3.asp>.