

MDS Alert

What Do You Think?: Can You Count These Wound Treatments As Physical Therapy Minutes On The MDS?

The answer is yes, if ...

Question: Can a facility count electrical stimulation or electromagnetic therapy wound treatments for Stage 3 or 4 pressure ulcers, diabetic ulcers, venous or arterial ulcers, provided by the physical therapist as therapy minutes on the MDS?

Answer: A national coverage determination (NCD) has addressed electrical stimulation coverage. The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** posted another NCD saying that the same coverage requirements and limitations that apply to electrical stimulation for wounds also apply to electromagnetic therapy for wounds.

Part A or Part B only covers the treatments when the patient has received standard wound therapy for 30 days with no measurable signs of wound healing. And Medicare only covers the treatments when they are provided by a physical therapist or physician. The 30-day period can begin when the wound is acute -- for example, treatment in the hospital or in a home health setting. To continue the e-stim or electromagnetic wound treatment, the patient's wound has to show measurable signs of healing over 30 days.

Source: Information provided by **Marc Zimmet, MBA**, principal, **Zimmet Healthcare Services Group LLC**, Morganville, NJ.