

Modifier Coding Alert

You Be the Coder: Count How Many Patients and Pick a U Modifier

Question: A physician in our office used a portable x-ray machine to take a two-view chest x-ray of two patients at a nursing facility. Our radiologist interpreted the chest x-rays in the office. How do I report both of these services?

Rhode Island Subscriber

Answer: Because the physician transported the equipment to the patients, you need to code one of the five transportation codes. For this scenario, report R0075 (Transportation of portable x-ray equipment and personnel to home or nursing home, per trip to facility or location, more than one patient seen) because the physician saw two patients. Attach modifier UN (Two patients served).

Any time you report R0075, you need to indicate how many patients the provider saw using one of the following modifiers:

- UN
- UP ☐ Three patients served
- UQ ☐ Four patients served
- UR ☐ Five patients served
- US ☐ Six or more patients served.

Tip: If your physician only takes one patient x-ray with the portable device, report R0070 (Transportation of portable x-ray equipment and personnel to home or nursing home, per trip to facility or location, one patient seen).

Heads up: When you report R0070 and R0075, the equipment in question is what the physician transports to x-ray the patient(s). It's not equipment owned by the facility she visits.

Report the radiologist's service with 71020 (Radiologic examination, chest, 2 views, frontal and lateral) with modifier 26 (Professional component) attached and place of service (POS) 11 (Office).