

Pain Management Coding Alert

You Be the Coder: How to Correctly Code for Ongoing Lumbar Drain Check

Question: Our pain management physician inserted a lumbar drain and wants to leave it in place for several days. He listed 62272 as the procedure code. What should we report for daily inpatient visits from the physician? Are there any guidelines for this type of situation?

Washington Subscriber

Answer: The daily management code 01996 (Daily hospital management of epidural or subarachnoid continuous drug administration) sometimes is appropriate for follow-up pain management care, but doesn't apply in this situation because it refers to management of a continuous infusion of a medication. Your physician is instead checking the functioning of the lumbar cerebral spinal fluid drain.

Code 62272 (Spinal puncture, therapeutic, for drainage of cerebrospinal fluid [by needle or catheter]) doesn't have any associated global days. If the physician meets the documentation requirements, then you can bill the appropriate E/M code for a subsequent hospital care visit (99231-99233).