

Chiropractic Coding & Compliance Alert

Accreditation: Don't Miss Your New Power With Modified Pain Management Standards

Joint Commission includes chiropractic services in the revised EPs for 2015.

Services provided by doctors of chiropractic and acupuncture are now included in the standard of care for pain management, effective January 2015.

"Chiropractors who are also chiropractic acupuncturists haven't always been recognized as being able to provide acupuncture without jumping through hoops to get it paid by the insurance companies," says **Doreen Boivin, CPC, CCA**, with Chiro Practice, Inc., in Saco, Maine. "Even though benefit verifications indicate acupuncture is a covered service, it is not reimbursable when provided in a chiropractor's office. Most providers have it as a cash service," she explains.

Background: The Joint Commission published the revised standard PC.01.02.07 on the Provision of Care, Treatment, and Services, which addresses pain management. The Commission revised the rationale and added a note to element of performance (EP) 4, following an extensive literature review. Clinical experts in pain management who provide input to the Commission's standards affirmed that future treatment strategies may consider both pharmacologic and nonpharmacologic approaches.

The Joint Commission has revised its pain management standard to include chiropractic services.

The new standard also advises organizations, when considering the use of medications to treat pain, to weigh both the benefits to the patient, as well as the potential risks of opioid dependency, addiction, and abuse. "While the pharmaceutical companies may not like this, it is a great opportunity to provide an alternative treatment method for those- who don't want to take medications for pain," reflects Boivin. "This will help chiropractors educate the patient population in need of pain management," she further explains.

Power to you: The change should enable the chiropractic profession to help more patients who might not previously have been informed of non-drug approaches to pain management by their health care system or doctor. The impact "is huge," Boivin says. "We are always trying to assist our patients with alternative treatments. It helps to educate the patients, give them relief and help them in a more natural way."

More to follow: Similar revisions are scheduled for the behavioral health care program (in the "Care, Treatment, and Services" chapter) with a July 1, 2015, effective date.

For more information, visit <http://bit.ly/1qEuR0e>.