

Chiropractic Coding & Compliance Alert

Reader Question: Does Medicare Accept Other Words for Spinal Manipulation?

Question: While documenting spinal manipulation treatment for a patient with spinal subluxation at lumber level, our DC mentioned the word "correction" instead of treatment. How do we know that Medicare would recognize this term as an acceptable covered service?

Iowa Subscriber

Answer: Rest assured, Medicare is sensitive and receptive enough when it comes to recognizing different terms and synonyms, and determining that the documentation points towards "Manual manipulation." The word "correction" is acceptable in place of "treatment." Here is a list of different terms chiropractors tend to use, and Medicare recognizes all of them as "Manual manipulation:"

- Spine or spinal adjustment by manual means;
- Spine or spinal manipulation;
- Manual adjustment; and
- Vertebral manipulation or adjustment.

In case Medicare is unable to recognize the term the chiropractor has used to describe the nature of the service, the claim is referred for professional review and interpretation.