

Related Change Request (CR) #: 3619

Medlearn Matters Number: MM3619

Related CR Release Date: December 15, 2004

Related CR Transmittal #: 395

Effective Date: January 1, 2005

Implementation Date: January 3, 2005

Ambulance Fee Schedule – Medical Conditions List

Provider Types Affected

Providers and suppliers of ambulance services as well as Medicare contractors (carriers and fiscal intermediaries)

Provider Action Needed

This article is for educational guideline only. It explains use of the Ambulance Fee Schedule – Medical Conditions List to help you document your patient's signs and symptoms on scene and during ambulance transportation. It will also tell you how to find the ambulance medical conditions code list.

Background

Under Medicare, the Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) codes provide a uniform method for providers and suppliers to report professional services, while the International Classification of Diseases 9th Edition Clinical Modification (ICD-9-CM) codes document the patient's diagnosis or clinical signs or symptoms. The Ambulance Fee Schedule – Medical Conditions List, which this article and related CR 3619 discuss, gives you a crosswalk from the ICD-9-CM code (which your dispatch centers and/or ambulance crews may use to describe a patient's medical condition or signs and symptoms on scene and during the transport) to the HCPCS code.

Please note the following details:

- Using the ICD-9-CM diagnosis/ambulance medical condition code(s) (and their crosswalk to HCPCS codes) will not guarantee payment of the claim or payment for a certain level of service.
- Remember that you must retain adequate documentation of dispatch instructions, patient's condition, other on-scene information, and details of the transport (e.g., medications administered, changes in the patient's condition, and miles traveled), all of which may be subject to medical review by your Medicare contractor or other oversight authority. Additionally, your contractor will rely on medical record documentation (and not simply the HCPCS code or the condition code by themselves) to justify coverage.

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- Also be aware that all current Medicare ambulance policies remain in place.

NOTE: Providers/suppliers should use the ICD-9-CM code (not the ambulance condition code) on the Ambulance Claim Form.

Additional Information

You can find more information about the Ambulance Fee Schedule – Medical Conditions List by going to:

http://www.cms.hhs.gov/manuals/transmittals/comm_date_dsc.asp

From that web page, look for CR 3619 in the CR NUM column on the right, and click on the file for that CR. The Ambulance Fee Schedule – Medical Conditions List can be found as an attachment to that CR.

If you have any questions, please contact your carrier/intermediary at their toll-free number, which may be found at:

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medlearn/tollnums.asp>

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