



News Flash – Did you know that your local Medicare contractor (carrier, fiscal intermediary, or Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC)) is a valuable source of news and information regarding Medicare business in your specific practice location? Through their electronic mailing lists, your local contractor can quickly provide you with information pertinent to your geographic area, such as local coverage determinations, local provider education activities, etc. If you have not done so already, you should go to your local contractor website and sign up for their listserv or e-mailing list. Many contractors have links on their home page to take you to their registration page to subscribe to their listserv. If you do not see a link on the homepage, just search their site for “listserv” or “e-mail list” to find the registration page. If you do not know the Web address of your contractor’s homepage, it is available at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/CallCenterTollNumDirectory.zip> on the CMS website.

MLN Matters Number: MM6370

Related Change Request (CR) #: 6370

Related CR Release Date: February 27, 2009

Effective Date: April 1, 2009

Related CR Transmittal #: R1689CP

Implementation Date: April 6, 2009

New Waived Tests

Provider Types Affected

Clinical laboratories and providers that submit claims to Medicare carriers and/or Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) for laboratory test services provided to Medicare beneficiaries.

Provider Action Needed

This article is based on Change Request (CR) 6370 and alerts providers that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has listed the twelve latest tests approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as waived tests under Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments of 1988 (CLIA). The tests newly added to the waived tests are in the table on page 2 of this article. Be sure your billing staffs are aware of these changes.

Background

Disclaimer

This article was prepared as a service to the public and is not intended to grant rights or impose obligations. This article may contain references or links to statutes, regulations, or other policy materials. The information provided is only intended to be a general summary. It is not intended to take the place of either the written law or regulations. We encourage readers to review the specific statutes, regulations and other interpretive materials for a full and accurate statement of their contents. CPT only copyright 2008 American Medical Association.

CLIA regulations require a facility to be appropriately certified for each test it performs. To ensure that Medicare & Medicaid only pay for laboratory tests categorized as waived complexity under CLIA in facilities with a CLIA certificate of waiver, laboratory claims are currently edited at the CLIA certificate level. CMS identifies CLIA waived tests by providing an updated list of waived tests to the Medicare contractors on a quarterly basis via a Recurring Update Notification. To be recognized as a waived test, some CLIA waived tests have unique HCPCS procedure codes and some must have a QW modifier included with the HCPCS code.

Listed below are the latest tests approved by the Food and Drug Administration as waived tests under CLIA. The Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) codes for the following new tests must have the modifier QW to be recognized as a waived test. However, the tests mentioned on the first page of the attachment to CR 6370 at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/Transmittals/downloads/R1689CP.pdf> on the CMS website (i.e., CPT codes: 81002, 81025, 82270, 82272, G0394, 82962, 83026, 84830, 85013, and 85651) do not require a QW modifier to be recognized as a waived test.

CPT Code	Effective Date	Description
87880QW	July 17, 2008	Henry Schein One Step+ Strep A Dipstick Test
81003QW	October 17, 2008	Consult diagnostics Urine Analyzer
82465QW (Contact your Medicare carrier or MAC for claims instructions.), 82947QW, 82950QW, 82951QW, 82952QW, 83036QW, 84478QW	October 31, 2008	Wako APOLOWAKO Analyzer (Whole Blood)
83986QW	November 4, 2008	Common Sense Ltd. Norma-Sense Vaginal Discharge pH Test
80101QW	November 4, 2008	Mossman Associates, Inc. NicCheck I Test Strips
83036QW	November 13, 2008	Siemens DCA 2000 Analyzer
83036QW	November 13, 2008	Siemens DCA 2000+ Analyzer
82565QW	November 13, 2008	Abbott i-STAT Crea Cartridge {Whole Blood}
82947QW, 82950QW, 82951QW, 82952QW	November 13, 2008	Abbott i-STAT G Cartridge {Whole Blood}
82435QW, 82947QW,	November 13, 2008	Abbott i-STAT 6+ Cartridge {Whole

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CPT Code	Effective Date	Description
82950QW, 82951QW, 82952QW, 84132QW, 84295QW, 84520QW, 85014QW		Blood}
82947QW, 82950QW, 82951QW, 82952QW, 84132QW, 84295QW, 85014QW	November 13, 2008	Abbott i-STAT EC4+ Cartridge {Whole Blood}
84295QW, 84132QW, 85014QW	November 13, 2008	Abbott i-STAT E3+ Cartridge {Whole Blood}

Please note that your Medicare contractor will not search their files to either retract payment or retroactively pay claims processed before CR 6370 is implemented; however, they will adjust claims that you bring to their attention.

Additional Information

You can find the official instruction, CR 6370, issued to your carrier or MAC by visiting <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/Transmittals/downloads/R1689CP.pdf> on the CMS website.

If you have any questions, please contact your carrier or MAC at their toll-free number, which may be found at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/CallCenterTollNumDirectory.zip> on the CMS website.

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