



Related MLN Matters Article #: MM4038

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### *Auditory Osseointegrated and Auditory Brainstem Devices*

#### Key Words

MM4038, CR4038, R39BP, Auditory brainstem devices, Osseointegrated, brainstem, device

#### Provider Types Affected

Physicians and providers billing Medicare carriers or fiscal intermediaries (FIs) for auditory osseointegrated and auditory brainstem devices.

#### Key Points

- The effective date for the instruction is November 10, 2005.
- The implementation date is December 12, 2005.
- The definition of "hearing aids" in the *Medicare Claims Processing Manual* was modified to exclude certain implanted devices from the category of hearing aid.
- Medicare contractors will not pay for any Part A or Part B expenses incurred to items or services related to "hearing aids or examination for the purpose of prescribing, fitting, or changing hearing aids." (42 CFR 411.15(d)) These items and services are excluded from coverage.
- The definition of hearing aids now indicates that auditory osseointegrated (code L8699) devices and auditory brainstem (code L8614) devices are prosthetic devices that are eligible for Medicare payment.
- Medicare will pay for osseointegrated auditory and brainstem auditory devices as prosthetic devices, but only when indicated – where hearing aids are medically inappropriate, or cannot be used due to:
  - Congenital malformations;
  - Chronic disease;
  - Severe sensorineural hearing loss; or
  - Surgery.
- Hospital outpatient departments and physicians should bill related implantation services using the current codes for osseointegrated implantation (such as 69714, 69715, 69717, and 60718) for device code L8699.

- Physicians should bill the appropriate services for implantation of the auditory brainstem device (code L8614), using the codes for tumor resection (61520, 61530, 61598), if indicated, and also a code for cranial neurostimulators (61875).
- Please refer page 2 of MLN article MM4038 for a definition of “hearing aids” and the following prosthetic devices:
  - Cochlear implants and auditory brainstem implants;
  - Osseointegrated implants.

**Note:** MM3796 outlines the policy guidelines for cochlear implantation coverage and provides a listing of Healthcare Common Procedural Coding System (HCPCS) codes that are associated with cochlear implantation.

### Important Links

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/MM4038.pdf>

Affected providers can find the official instruction issued to their intermediary regarding this change at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/Transmittals/downloads/R39BP.pdf> on the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) website.

MM3796 can be found at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/MM3796.pdf> on the CMS website.

To view CR3796, Transmittal #601: Cochlear Implantation, go to <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/Transmittals/downloads/R601CP.pdf> on the CMS website.