

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services



Revised products from the Medicare Learning Network® (MLN)

- The “[Ambulance Fee Schedule](#)” Fact Sheet (ICN 006835) in downloadable format.

MLN Matters® Number: MM8641

Related Change Request (CR) #: CR8641

Related CR Release Date: March 14, 2014

Effective Date: January 1, 2014

Related CR Transmittal #: R2907CP

Implementation Date: June 16, 2014

Clinical Laboratory Fee Schedule – Medicare Travel Allowance Fees for Collection of Specimens for Calendar Year (CY) 2014

Provider Types Affected

This MLN Matters® Article is intended for clinical diagnostic laboratories submitting claims to Medicare Administration Contractors (A/B Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs)) for services provided to Medicare beneficiaries.

Provider Action Needed



STOP – Impact to You

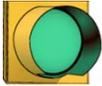
This article is based on Change Request (CR) 8641 which informs MACS and providers about changes to the Clinical Laboratory Fee Schedule (CLFS) related to travel allowances and specimen collection fees.

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 2013 American Medical Association.

**CAUTION – What You Need to Know**

CR8641 revises the payment of travel allowances when billed on a per mileage basis using Health Care Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) code P9603 and when billed on a flat rate basis using HCPCS code P9604 for CY 2014.

**GO – What You Need to Do**

Make sure your billing staffs are aware of these changes.

Background

HCPCS travel codes allow for payment on either a per mileage basis (HCPCS code P9603) or a flat rate per trip basis (HCPCS code P9604). Payment of the travel allowance is made only if a specimen collection fee is also payable. The travel allowance is intended to cover the estimated travel costs of collecting a specimen including the laboratory technician's salary and travel expenses. MAC discretion allows the MAC to choose either a mileage basis or a flat rate, and how to set each type of allowance. Many MACs have established local policy to pay based on a flat rate basis only.

Under either method, **when one trip is made for multiple specimen collections** (for example, at a nursing home), the travel payment component is prorated based on the number of specimens collected on that trip, for both Medicare and non-Medicare patients, either at the time the claim is submitted by the laboratory, or when the flat rate is set by the MAC.

Per Mile Travel Allowance (P9603)

The per mile travel allowance is to be:

- Used in situations where the average trip to the patients' homes is **longer than 20 miles round trip**, and
- **Prorated in situations where specimens are drawn from non-Medicare patients in the same trip.**

The Internal Revenue Service determines the standard mileage rate for businesses based on periodic studies of the fixed and variable costs of operating an automobile. The allowance per mile was computed using the Federal mileage rate of **\$0.56 per mile plus an additional \$0.45 per mile** to cover the technician's time and travel costs.

Note: MACs have the option of establishing a higher per mile rate in excess of the minimum total of \$1.01 per mile (\$0.56 per mile plus \$0.45 per mile) if local conditions warrant it.

The minimum mileage rate will be reviewed and updated throughout the year, as well as in conjunction with the CLFS, as needed. At no time will the laboratory be allowed to bill for

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 2013 American Medical Association.

more miles than are reasonable, or for miles that are not actually traveled by the laboratory technician.

Per Flat-Rate Trip Basis Travel Allowance (P9604)

The per flat-rate trip basis travel allowance is **\$10.10**.

CR8641 includes as an attachment the revised Chapter 16, Section 60.2 (Travel Allowance) of the "Medicare Claims Processing Manual" to include the travel allowance payment rates for CY 2014.

Additional Information

The official instruction, CR8641 issued to your A/B MACs regarding this change is <http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Transmittals/Downloads/R2907CP.pdf> on the CMS website.

If you have any questions, please contact your A/B MACs at their toll-free number, which is available at <http://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Monitoring-Programs/provider-compliance-interactive-map/index.html> on the CMS website.

News Flash - Generally, Medicare Part B covers one flu vaccination and its administration per flu season for beneficiaries without co-pay or deductible. Now is the perfect time to vaccinate beneficiaries. Health care providers are encouraged to get a flu vaccine to help protect themselves from the flu and to keep from spreading it to their family, co-workers, and patients. Note: The flu vaccine is not a Part D-covered drug. For more information, visit:

- [MLN Matters® Article #MM8433](#), "Influenza Vaccine Payment Allowances - Annual Update for 2013-2014 Season"
- [MLN Matters® Article #SE1336](#), "2013-2014 Influenza (Flu) Resources for Health Care Professionals"
- [HealthMap Vaccine Finder](#) - a free, online service where users can search for locations offering flu and other adult vaccines. While some providers may offer flu vaccines, those that don't can help their patients locate flu vaccines within their local community.
- [Free Resources](#) can be downloaded from the CDC website including prescription-style tear-pads that will allow you to give a customized flu shot reminder to patients at high-risk for complications from the flu. On the CDC order form, under "Programs", select "Immunizations and Vaccines (Influenza/Flu)" for a list of flu related resources.

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 2013 American Medical Association.