

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



**Raising Awareness of Diabetes in November** - During the month of November, the United States draws attention to diabetes and its impact on public health through several national health observances, including National Diabetes Month, Diabetic Eye Disease Month, and World Diabetes Day. Millions of Americans have diabetes and don't know it. Left undiagnosed or untreated, diabetes can lead to severe complications such as heart disease, stroke, blindness, kidney disease, amputation, and even premature death. [Read more](#) to learn about the preventive services covered by Medicare that focus on early disease detection and disease management.

MLN Matters® Number: MM8970

Related Change Request (CR) #: CR 8970

Related CR Release Date: November 14, 2014

Effective Date: January 1, 2015

Related CR Transmittal #: R3120CP

Implementation Date: January 5, 2015

## Therapy Cap Values for Calendar Year (CY) 2015

### Provider Types Affected

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This MLN Matters® Article is intended for physicians, therapists, and other providers, submitting claims to Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs), including Home Health & Hospice MACs, for outpatient rehabilitation services provided to Medicare beneficiaries.

### Provider Action Needed

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Change Request (CR) 8970 informs MACs about changes to outpatient therapy caps for Calendar Year (CY) 2015. **For physical therapy and speech-language pathology combined, the therapy cap will be \$1,940. For occupational therapy, the cap for 2015 will be \$1,940.** Make sure that your billing staffs are aware of these changes.

#### 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.

## Background

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The Balanced Budget Act of 1997, P.L. 105-33, Section 4541(c) applies, per beneficiary, annual financial limitations on expenses considered incurred for outpatient therapy services under Medicare Part B, commonly referred to as “therapy caps.” The therapy caps are updated each year based on the Medicare Economic Index. An exceptions process to the therapy caps for reasonable and medically necessary services was required by section 5107 of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. The exceptions process for the therapy caps has been continuously extended several times through subsequent legislation. Most recently, section 103 of the Protecting Access to Medicare Act of 2014 extended the therapy caps exceptions process through March 31, 2015.

## Additional Information

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The official instruction, CR 8970, issued to your MAC regarding this change, is available at <http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Transmittals/Downloads/R3120CP.pdf> on the CMS website.

If you have any questions, please contact your MAC at their toll-free number. That number is available at <http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Net/work-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/index.html> under - How Does It Work.

**Seasonal Flu Vaccinations** - 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 on coverage and billing of the influenza vaccine and its administration, please visit [MLN Matters® Article #MM8890](#), “Influenza Vaccine Payment Allowances - Annual Update for 2014-2015 Season” and [MLN Matters® Article #SE1431](#), “2014-2015 Influenza (Flu) Resources for Health Care Professionals.”

While some providers may offer flu vaccines, those that don’t can help their patients locate flu vaccines within their local community. The [HealthMap Vaccine Finder](#) is a free online service where users can search for locations offering flu and other adult vaccines. If you provide vaccination services and would like to be included in the HealthMap Vaccine Finder database, [register](#) for an account to submit your information in the database. Also, visit the CDC [Influenza \(Flu\)](#) web page for the latest information on flu including the CDC 2014-2015 recommendations for the prevention and control of influenza.

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