

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services



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MLN Matters® Number: MM9369

Related Change Request (CR) #: CR 9369

Related CR Release Date: October 16, 2015

Effective Date: January 1, 2016

Related CR Transmittal #: R3378CP

Implementation Date: January 1, 2016

Additional G-Codes Differentiating RNs and LPNs in the Home Health and Hospice Settings

Provider Types Affected

This MLN Matters® Article is intended for providers of hospice care, including routine home care (RHC), and home health care that submit claims to Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) for services to Medicare beneficiaries.

Provider Action Needed

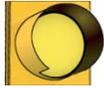


STOP – Impact to You

If you provide home health and/or hospice care and bill for the services of Registered Nurses (RNs) and/or Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs), the implementation of payment changes discussed in this article may impact your Medicare payments.

Disclaimer

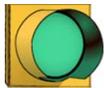
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CAUTION – What You Need to Know

CR9369 establishes new G-codes to differentiate levels of nursing services provided during a hospice stay and a home health episode of care. These two G-codes and the retirement of G0154 will be effective on institutional claims (Types of Bill 032x, 081x, and 082x) for hospice dates of service on and after January 1, 2016, and for home health episodes of care ending on or after January 1, 2016:

1. Service provided by an RN will be coded as G0299 (Direct skilled nursing services of a registered nurse (RN) in the home health or hospice setting); and
2. Service provided by an LPN will be coded as G0300 (Direct skilled nursing of a licensed practical nurse (LPN) in the home health or hospice setting).



GO – What You Need to Do

Make sure that your billing staffs are aware of these changes.

Background

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is implementing a Service Intensity Add-On (SIA) payment for skilled visits (provided by an RN and/or medical social worker) during the last seven days of life during a hospice election. The SIA payment would be paid in addition to the current per diem rate for the RHC level of care. These changes are discussed in MLN Matters® article [MM9201](#).

The SIA policy necessitates the creation of two new G-codes for nursing for use when billing skilled nursing visits (revenue center 055x), one for a RN and one for a LPN. During periods of crisis, such as the precipitous decline before death, patient needs intensify and RNs are more highly trained clinicians with commensurately higher payment rates who can appropriately meet those increased needs. Moreover, CMS rules at section 418.56(a)(1) (see <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2010-title42-vol3/pdf/CFR-2010-title42-vol3-sec418-56.pdf>) require the RN member of the hospice interdisciplinary group to be responsible for ensuring that the needs of the patient and family are continually assessed. CMS expects that at end of life, the needs of the patient and family will need to be frequently assessed; thus the skills of an RN are required. As such, the SIA policy was finalized to recognize additional payment at end-of-life for services provided by RNs and not LPNs.

In order to quantify the amount of RN services provided to a patient, hospice claims must differentiate between nursing services provided by an RN and nursing services provided by an LPN. Therefore, CMS established new codes to distinguish between RN services (G0299) and LPN services (G0300). The current single G-code of G0154 for “direct skilled nursing services of a licensed nurse (LPN or RN) in the home health or hospice setting” will

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be retired. Since G0154 is used in both the home health and hospice settings, home health agencies and hospices will be required to use G0299 for “direct skilled nursing services of an RN in the home health or hospice setting” and G0300 “direct skilled nursing of an LPN in the home health or hospice setting”.

Additional Information

The official instruction, CR9369 issued to your MAC regarding this change, is available at <https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Transmittals/Downloads/R3378CP.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-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/index.html> under - How Does It Work.

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