



News Flash - The April 2008 version of the *Critical Access Hospital Fact Sheet* is now available in downloadable format from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Medicare Learning Network at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/CritAccessHospfctsh.pdf> on the CMS website. If this hyperlink does not take you directly to the fact sheet, please copy and paste the URL in your Internet browser. The fact sheet provides information about eligible Critical Access Hospital (CAH) providers; CAH designation; CAH payments; reasonable cost payment principles that do not apply to CAHs; election of Standard Method or Optional (Elective) Payment Method; Medicare Rural Pass-Through funding for certain anesthesia services; Health Professional Shortage Area Incentive payments; Physician Scarcity Area Bonus payments; Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003; and grants to states under the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program. The fact sheet is also now available in print format. To place your order, visit <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/mlngeninfo/>, scroll down to "Related Links Inside CMS" and select "MLN Product Ordering Page."

MLN Matters Number: MM6176

Related Change Request (CR) #: 6176

Related CR Release Date: August 29, 2008

Effective Date: January 1, 2009

Related CR Transmittal #: R3720TN

Implementation Date: January 5, 2009

Update of the Intern-to-Bed Ratio for Method II Teaching Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs)

Provider Types Affected

Method II teaching CAHs submitting claims to Medicare contractors (Fiscal Intermediaries (FIs) and/or Part A/B Medicare Administrative Contractors (A/B MACs)) for services provided to Medicare beneficiaries.

What You Need to Know

This article is based on Change Request (CR) 6176 which notifies Medicare contractors that they should update the intern-to-bed ratio on the Provider Specific File for Method II teaching CAHs when the field contains zeroes. Your Medicare contractor will contact you to obtain your intern to bed ratio. An intern-to-bed ratio greater than zero is used to determine if the Method II CAH is a teaching hospital,

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and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) identifies teaching hospitals by an intern-to-bed ratio greater than 0.

Background

Physicians and non-physician practitioners billing on type of bill (TOB) 85X for professional services rendered in a Method II CAH have the option of reassigning their billing rights to the Critical Access Hospital (CAH). When the billing rights are reassigned to the Method II CAH, payment is then made to the CAH for professional services (revenue codes (RC) 96X, 97X or 98X).

Medicare makes payment for an assistant-at-surgery when:

- The procedure is authorized for an assistant; and
- The person performing the service is a:
 - Physician;
 - Physician assistant (PA);
 - Nurse practitioner (NP); or
 - Clinical nurse specialist (CNS).

The Social Security Act (Section 1842(b)(7)(D); see http://www.ssa.gov/OP_Home/ssact/title18/1842.htm on the internet) stipulates that no payment shall be made for the services of assistant-at-surgery with respect to a surgical procedure if a hospital has a training program relating to the medical specialty required for the surgical procedure, and a qualified individual on the staff of the hospital is available to provide such services. Payment may be made for assistant-at-surgery services that are required due to exceptional medical circumstances.

Payment may be made for the services of assistants-at-surgery in teaching hospitals notwithstanding the availability of a qualified resident to furnish the services. There may be exceptional medical circumstances (emergency, life threatening situations such as multiple traumatic injuries, etc.) which require immediate treatment, or there may be situations in which the medical staff may find that exceptional medical circumstances justify the services of a physician assistant-at-surgery even though a qualified resident is available.

Payment may also be made for the services of assistants-at-surgery in teaching hospitals if the primary surgeon has an across-the-board policy of never involving residents in the preoperative, operative, or postoperative care of his or her patients.

An intern-to-bed ratio greater than zero is used to determine if the Method II CAH is a teaching hospital, and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

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identifies teaching hospitals by an intern-to-bed ratio greater than 0. It has been brought to the attention of the CMS that the intern-to-bed ratio located on the Provider Specific File is not being updated for Method II teaching CAHs. Therefore, CR 6176 advises Medicare contractors to contact Method II teaching CAHs to obtain their intern to bed ratio and update the intern-to-bed ratio on their Provider Specific File for Method II teaching CAHs when it contains zeroes so that teaching CAHs are properly identified for claims processing purposes.

Additional Information

The official instruction, CR 6176, issued to your FI and A/B MAC regarding this change may be viewed at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/Transmittals/downloads/R372OTN.pdf> on the CMS website.

If you have any questions, please contact your FI or A/B 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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