

<b>CMS Manual System</b>	<b>Department of Health &amp; Human Services (DHHS)</b>
<b>Pub 100-02 Medicare Benefit Policy</b>	<b>Centers for Medicare &amp; Medicaid Services (CMS)</b>
<b>Transmittal 204</b>	<b>Date: March 13, 2015</b>
	<b>Change Request 8997</b>

**SUBJECT: Updates to the Medicare Internet-Only Manual Chapters for Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) Providers**

**I. SUMMARY OF CHANGES:** This instruction updates various sections of the internet-only manual chapters in regards to SNF policy and billing.

**EFFECTIVE DATE: June 15, 2015**

*\*Unless otherwise specified, the effective date is the date of service.*

**IMPLEMENTATION DATE: June 15, 2015**

*Disclaimer for manual changes only: The revision date and transmittal number apply only to red italicized material. Any other material was previously published and remains unchanged. However, if this revision contains a table of contents, you will receive the new/revised information only, and not the entire table of contents.*

**II. CHANGES IN MANUAL INSTRUCTIONS:** (N/A if manual is not updated)

R=REVISED, N=NEW, D=DELETED-*Only One Per Row.*

<b>R/N/D</b>	<b>CHAPTER / SECTION / SUBSECTION / TITLE</b>
R	8/20.1/Three-Day Prior Hospitalization
R	8/20.2.3/Readmission to a SNF

**III. FUNDING:**

**For Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs):**

The Medicare Administrative Contractor is hereby advised that this constitutes technical direction as defined in your contract. CMS does not construe this as a change to the MAC Statement of Work. The contractor is not obligated to incur costs in excess of the amounts allotted in your contract unless and until specifically authorized by the Contracting Officer. If the contractor considers anything provided, as described above, to be outside the current scope of work, the contractor shall withhold performance on the part(s) in question and immediately notify the Contracting Officer, in writing or by e-mail, and request formal directions regarding continued performance requirements.

**IV. ATTACHMENTS:**

**Business Requirements  
Manual Instruction**

# Attachment - Business Requirements

Pub. 100-02	Transmittal: 204	March 13, 2015	Change Request: 8997
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## I. GENERAL INFORMATION

**A. Background:** This Change Request (CR) updates chapter 8 of Pub 100-02, the Medicare Benefit Policy Manual.

**B. Policy:** N/A

## II. BUSINESS REQUIREMENTS TABLE

*"Shall" denotes a mandatory requirement, and "should" denotes an optional requirement.*

Number	Requirement	Responsibility								
		A/B MAC			D M E	Shared-System Maintainers				Other
		A	B	H H H		F I S S	M C S	V M S	C W F	
8997-02.1	Medicare contractors shall be aware of the revisions to Pub 100-02, Chapter 8.	X								

## III. PROVIDER EDUCATION TABLE

Number	Requirement	Responsibility				
		A/B MAC			D M E	C E D I
		A	B	H H H		
8997 – 02.2	MLN Article: A provider education article related to this instruction will be available at <a href="http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/">http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/</a> shortly after the CR is released. You will receive notification of the article release via the established "MLN Matters" listserv. Contractors shall post this article, or a direct link to this article, on their Web sites and include information about it in a listserv message within 5 business days after receipt of the notification from CMS announcing the availability of the article. In addition, the	X				

Number	Requirement	Responsibility				
		A/B MAC			D M E	C E D I
		A	B	H H H		
	provider education article shall be included in the contractor's next regularly scheduled bulletin. Contractors are free to supplement MLN Matters articles with localized information that would benefit their provider community in billing and administering the Medicare program correctly.					

**IV. SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**Section A: Recommendations and supporting information associated with listed requirements: N/A**

*"Should" denotes a recommendation.*

X-Ref Requirement Number	Recommendations or other supporting information:

**Section B: All other recommendations and supporting information: N/A**

**V. CONTACTS**

**Pre-Implementation Contact(s):** Jason Kerr, jason.kerr@cms.hhs.gov

**Post-Implementation Contact(s):** Contact your Contracting Officer's Representative (COR).

**VI. FUNDING**

**Section A: For Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs):**

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**ATTACHMENTS: 0**

## **20.1 - Three-Day Prior Hospitalization**

*(Rev.204, Issued: 03-13-15, Effective: 06-15-15, Implementation: 06-15-15)*

The hospital discharge must have occurred on or after the first day of the month in which the individual attained age 65 or, effective July 1, 1973, became entitled to health insurance benefits under the disability or chronic renal disease provisions of the law. The 3 consecutive calendar day stay requirement can be met by stays totaling 3 consecutive days in one or more hospitals. In determining whether the requirement has been met, the day of admission, but not the day of discharge, is counted as a hospital inpatient day.

Time spent in observation or in the emergency room prior to (or in lieu of) an inpatient admission to the hospital does not count toward the 3-day qualifying inpatient hospital stay, as a person who appears at a hospital's emergency room seeking examination or treatment or is placed on observation has not been admitted to the hospital as an inpatient; instead, the person receives outpatient services. For purposes of the SNF benefit's qualifying hospital stay requirement, inpatient status commences with the calendar day of hospital admission. See 31 Fed. Reg. 10116, 10118-19 (July 27, 1966).

To be covered, the extended care services must have been for the treatment of a condition for which the beneficiary was receiving inpatient hospital services (including services of an emergency hospital) or a condition which arose while in the SNF for treatment of a condition for which the beneficiary was previously hospitalized. In this context, the applicable hospital condition need not have been the principal diagnosis that actually precipitated the beneficiary's admission to the hospital, but could be any one of the conditions present during the qualifying hospital stay.

In addition, the qualifying hospital stay must have been medically necessary. Medical necessity will generally be presumed to exist. When the facts that come to the intermediary's attention during the course of its normal claims review process indicate that the hospitalization may not have been medically necessary, it will fully develop the case, checking with the attending physician and the hospital, as appropriate. The intermediary will rule the stay unnecessary only when hospitalization for 3 days represents a substantial departure from normal medical practice. However, in accordance with Pub. 100-04, Medicare Claims Processing Manual, chapter 30, section 130.2.A, when a beneficiary qualifies for limitation of liability in connection with the hospital stay, this conclusively establishes that the hospital stay was not medically necessary.

Even if a beneficiary's care during a qualifying hospital stay becomes less intensive during the latter part of the stay, the date of hospital "discharge" in this context is still considered to be the day that the beneficiary physically leaves the hospital, and the level of care being furnished at that particular point is not a determining factor as long as some portion of the stay included at least 3 consecutive days of medically necessary inpatient hospital services. In addition, when a hospital inpatient's care needs drop from acute- to SNF-level but no SNF bed is available, the regulations at 42 CFR 424.13(c) permit a physician to certify that the beneficiary's continued inpatient stay in the hospital is, in fact, medically necessary under this particular set of circumstances (see also Pub. 100-01, Medicare General Information, Eligibility, and Entitlement Manual, chapter 4, section 10.6). Accordingly, such additional, "alternate placement" days spent in the hospital can be included in the 3-day count toward meeting the SNF benefit's qualifying hospital stay requirement.

The 3-day hospital stay need not be in a hospital with which the SNF has a transfer agreement. However, the hospital must be either a Medicare-participating hospital or an institution that meets at least the conditions of participation for an emergency services hospital (see Pub. 100-01, Medicare General Information, Eligibility, and Entitlement Manual, Chapter 5, §20.2, for the definition of an emergency services hospital). A nonparticipating psychiatric hospital need not meet the special requirements applicable to psychiatric hospitals. Stays in Religious Nonmedical Health Care Institutions (See Pub. 100-01, Medicare General Information, Eligibility, and Entitlement Manual, Chapter 5, §40, for definition of RNHCIs) are excluded for the purpose of satisfying the 3-day period of hospitalization. See chapter 9,

section 40.1.5 of the Medicare Benefit Policy Manual, regarding a qualifying stay that consists of “general inpatient care” under the hospice benefit.

**NOTE:** While a 3-day stay in a psychiatric hospital satisfies the prior hospital stay requirement, institutions that primarily provide psychiatric treatment cannot participate in the program as SNFs. Therefore, a patient with only a psychiatric condition who is transferred from a psychiatric hospital to a participating SNF is likely to receive only non-covered care. In the SNF setting, the term “non-covered care” refers to any level of care less intensive than the SNF level of care that is covered under the program. (See §§30ff.).

### **20.2.3 - Readmission to a SNF**

*(Rev.204, Issued: 03-13-15, Effective: 06-15-15, Implementation: 06-15-15)*

If an individual who is receiving covered post-hospital extended care, leaves a SNF and is readmitted to the same or any other participating SNF for further covered care within 30 days of the last covered skilled day, the 30-day transfer requirement is considered to be met. *The same is true if the beneficiary remains in the SNF to receive custodial care following a covered stay, and subsequently develops a renewed need for covered care there within 30 consecutive days.* Thus, the period of extended care services may be interrupted briefly and then resumed, if necessary, without hospitalization preceding the *resumption of SNF coverage*. (See §§20.2.2 and 20.2.2.3 above for situations where a period of more than 30 days between SNF discharge and readmission, or more than 30 days of noncovered care in a SNF, is followed by later covered care.)