Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC) COVID-19 Test Pricing

January 25, 2021

On March 5 and February 13, 2020, CMS announced new Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) codes for healthcare providers and laboratories to use to bill Medicare for SARS-CoV2 tests. Starting in April 2020, laboratories performing SARS-CoV2/2019-nCoV (COVID-19) tests developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) could bill Medicare and other health insurers for services that occurred after February 4, 2020 using the newly created HCPCS code U0001, and laboratories performing non-CDC laboratory tests for SARS-CoV-2/2019-nCoV (COVID-19) could bill for them using HCPCS code U0002. Additionally, the American Medical Association (AMA) created CPT code 87635 for infectious agent detection by nucleic acid tests on March 13, 2020, as well as CPT codes 86769 and 86328 for serology tests on April 10, 2020. Laboratories performing these tests may bill Medicare for services that occurred after the codes’ respective effective dates.

Local Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) are responsible for developing the payment amount for claims they receive for newly created HCPCS codes in their respective jurisdictions until Medicare establishes national payment rates. The MAC-developed payment amounts are identified below. Since the last update to this table on May 19, 2020, a number of additional CPT codes have been created to describe types of COVID-19 laboratory testing.

As with other laboratory tests, there is generally no beneficiary cost sharing for COVID-19 laboratory tests under Medicare.

Note: Rates for HCPCS codes U0003, U0004, and U0005 established in CMS Ruling 2020-1-R and CMS Ruling 2020-1-R2 do not appear in the table below.
The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way, unless specifically incorporated into a contract. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law.