



Home Health Face-to-Face Encounter



Face-to-Face Encounter (F2F) Statute

Section 6407 of the Affordable Care Act requires, as a condition for payment, that the certifying physician documents that a face-to-face encounter occurred with the patient.

Face-to-Face Encounter (F2F) Requirements

- The face-to-face encounter can be performed by:
 - The certifying physician or the physician who cared for the patient in an acute or post-acute care facility from which the patient was directly admitted to home health
 - A nurse practitioner or a clinical nurse specialist who is working in collaboration with the certifying physician/acute or post-acute care physician in accordance with state law
 - A certified nurse midwife as authorized by state law, or physician assistant under the supervision of the certifying physician/acute or post-acute care physician

Face-to-Face Encounter (F2F)

42 CFR 424.22(a)(1)(v)

- The face-to-face encounter, which is related to the primary reason the patient requires home health services, must occur within 90 days prior to the start of care or up to 30 days after the start of care.
- The documentation of the encounter must include a narrative that explains why the clinical findings from the encounter support that the patient is confined to the home (homebound) and needs intermittent skilled nursing services, physical therapy or speech-language pathology services.
- The documentation of the encounter must be a separate and distinct section of, or an addendum to, the certification, and must include the date of the encounter and be clearly titled and dated, and signed by the certifying physician.

Clarification to the “Confined to the Home” Definition

- Change Request 8444, effective November 19, 2013, clarified the definition of “confined to the home” (i.e., homebound) in Chapter 7 of the Medicare Benefits Policy Manual (Pub. 100-02)
- The clarified “confined to the home” definition was finalized in the CY 2012 HH PPS final rule to more accurately reflect the definition as articulated at Sections 1814(a) and 1835(a) of the Social Security Act.

“Confined to the Home” Definition

An individual shall be considered “confined to the home” (homebound) if BOTH of the following two criteria are met:

Criteria One One Must Be Met:

Because of illness or injury, need the aid of supportive devices such as crutches, canes, wheelchairs, and walkers; the use of special transportation; or the assistance of another person in order to leave their place of residence

Have a condition such that leaving his or her home is medically contraindicated.

Criteria Two Both Must Be Met:

There must exist a normal inability to leave home

Leaving home must require a considerable and tiring effort