HIGHMARK CODING TIPS

COVID-19 Coding Reminders

Specimen Collection:

For the duration of the public health emergency period, providers can bill, and be reimbursed, for the nominal specimen collection fee for COVID-19 testing:

- Independent laboratories should use HCPCS codes G2023 and G2024 when collecting specimens from members who are homebound or non-hospital (SNF) inpatients.
- Hospital outpatient departments should use HCPCS code C9803 to bill for clinic visits dedicated to specimen collection.
- Provider offices should use CPT code 99211 when assessment of symptoms and COVID-19 specimen collection is performed for both new and established patients.

Note: When the specimen collection is performed as part of another service or procedure, such as a higher-level visit furnished by the billing practitioner, that higher level visit code should be billed, and the specimen collection would not be separately payable.

Please see Reimbursement Policy RP-041: Services Not Separately Reimbursed for additional details.

COVID-19 Vaccine and Administration Services:

Administration codes *include* vaccine risk/benefit counseling when performed. Therefore, a separate evaluation and management (E/M) code should not be reported, unless performed as a separately identifiable service distinct from the vaccine administration and documented in the patient's medical records. E/M services submitted as separately identifiable and distinct from the administration service should be reported with modifier 25 appended to the line.

Please refer Highmark Reimbursement Policy RP-064: Government Supplied Vaccinations and Antibody Treatments for additional information.

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