



To: NHPCO Membership
From: Regulatory & Compliance Team
Date: October 31, 2008

CMS Announces Proposal for Phase 3 of Hospice Data Collection on Claims

CMS has issued a proposal for Phase 3 of hospice data collection. They are asking for feedback from the hospice community about this data collection, which includes a measure of visit intensity and adds other disciplines for which there is already a billing code. NHPCO is providing members with this summary of the proposal and will offer listening sessions to get comments from providers. NHPCO will update members with more information as it becomes available. This alert includes:

- CMS data collection history
- Communication with CMS about data collection
- Recommendations for data collection for routine home care and continuous home care
- Recommendations for data collection for general inpatient and respite care
- Other data collection considerations
- Help prepare an NHPCO response - audio calls to be scheduled soon
- Opportunity for industry to provide feedback

CMS data collection history

CMS initiated hospice data collection to better evaluate trends in utilization of the Medicare hospice benefit per the recommendations of MedPAC, the Government Accountability Office and the Office of the Inspector General.

- January, 2007 ([CR 5745](#)) – CMS required hospices to report HCPCS code on the claim to describe the location where hospice services were provided.
- July 2007 ([CR 5567](#)) - CMS required hospices to provide detail on their claims about the number of physician, nurse, aide, and social worker visits provided to beneficiaries. The start date of this mandatory CR 5567 reporting requirement was July, 2008.

Communication with CMS about data collection

NHPCO and other hospice industry representatives have communicated to CMS over past year that the data collection information in CR 5567 was not comprehensive enough to accurately reflect hospice care, specifically mentioning that visit data does not measure visit intensity. CMS states it is committed to working

with the industry to expand data collection requirements for the next phase of data collection.

Recommendations for data collection for routine home care and continuous home care

CMS suggests that the next phase of data collection expand to include:

The reporting of the length of visits (in 15 minute increments) for routine home care and continuous home care, thus necessitating line-item billing.

Disciplines to be added are those where NUBC codes already exist -- physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech-language pathologists. CMS has suggested using the HCPCS G-codes already established for home health.

Reporting of some social worker phone calls involving the patient and or family.

Recommendations for data collection for general inpatient and respite care

CMS is interested in the total time per day spent caring for GIP and respite patients. They recommend the following:

Collect visit time per day by discipline and sum the time spent.

Round the total time to the nearest 15 minute increment and report the total time by discipline for each day at the GIP or respite levels of care.

Other data collection considerations

CMS is also considering whether to gather information on other interdisciplinary group services that hospices provide:

Comfort care
Volunteer services
Spiritual counseling.

While they recognize the importance of these services, they are considering whether this data might better be captured in the aggregate, via new or existing fields on the facility's cost report, rather than on the Medicare hospice claim. CMS has provided additional detail about phase 3 of the data collection in an announcement posted to the Hospice Center on the CMS Web site on October 30, 2008. To access the detail and a sample claim form, visit the [CMS Web site](#) and look under "Spotlights."

Help prepare an NHPCO Response

CMS is welcoming the hospice industry's thoughts and suggestions about phase three of the data collection. NHPCO's Regulatory Committee will provide a formal response to CMS about Phase 3 of the data collection.

To best prepare a response to CMS, NHPCO will be sponsoring three listening sessions for providers to call in and voice their comments and concerns about the next phase of data collection. Staff are currently working to schedule those calls and the membership will be made aware of the times as soon as the plans are in place.

An opportunity for the industry to provide feedback to CMS

Hospice providers can submit feedback to CMS at HospiceData@cms.hhs.gov by November 22, 2008. CMS states that they will consider industry input when deciding the best way to move forward with Phase 3 of the data collection. NHPCO will post talking points to our Regulatory and Compliance Center by November 10, 2008 to assist members in providing thoughtful feedback to CMS.

Any questions for NHPCO staff should be directed to regulatory@nhpco.org.



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