



053119 NEWS BLAST

ATTN: UNITED HEALTHCARE (UHC) PROVIDERS

Consult Codes (CPT 99241–99255)

In the March 2019 issue of its Provider Network Bulletin, UnitedHealthcare (UHC) announced that it will align with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and no longer reimburse consultation services represented by CPT codes 99241-99245 (outpatient) and 99251-99255 (inpatient) beginning later this year.

Implementation of the policy will occur in two phases.

- **Effective June 1, 2019, UHC will eliminate the consultation code payments for practices with contracted rates based on a stated year 2010 or later Medicare fee schedule.**
- **Effective Oct. 1, 2019, UHC will completely eliminate the consultation code payments for all practices.**

UHC* has not published a crosswalk, however, we are presuming they will follow Medicare guidelines. Review below information for a refresher on consult billing, also see the MEDDATA E&M Documentation & Consult Crosswalk Worksheet.

Consult Billing Guidelines:

Many carriers may still pay for consultation services as long as those services are supported by the “three Rs” of consult documentation: Request, Reason, and Report.

- Request: The written or verbal request for consult may be made by a physician or other appropriate source and documented in the patient’s medical record by either the consulting or requesting physician or appropriate source.
- Reason: The requesting provider must also state a specific reason (i.e., patient complaint or condition) to justify the need for a consultation.
- Report: The consulting provider must render his or her opinion and return a written report of his findings and treatment suggestions to the requesting provider.

NOTE: Consult codes not payable by government carriers: Medicare (MCR), Managed MCR, LA Medicaid (MCD), LA MCD MCO-BHP, Triwest and some Workers’ Comp carriers; and now a commercial payor United Healthcare (UHC).

Crosswalk:

99241-99245: Office/Outpatient Consult change to equivalent level of 99201-99215 (or 99281-99285 if ED) (per POS and New vs Est Patient).

99251-99252: Inpatient Consult change to equivalent level of 99231-99232, see Special Key Codes: 231C-233C.

99253-99255: For MCR/UHC* to: 99221-99223, Special Key Codes: 221C-223C

For LA MCD to: 99233, Special Key Code: 233C.

NOTE: Lower-level inpatient consult codes (99251-99252) aren’t directly comparable to a Level 1 initial hospital care code (99221) therefore no exact crosswalk. Code selection as supported by documentation.

NOTE: LA MCD does not allow crosswalk to 99221-99223, see 99231-99233.

Things to Remember when billing Consults:

“If it isn’t documented, it hasn’t been done” is an adage frequently heard in the health care setting.

Consults 99241-99255 were placed into “No Pay” status by CMS (Medicare); for services starting 01/01/2010, providers are to bill inpatient initial consults with 99221 – 99223 unmodified (special key code are recommended). Medicaid followed a few years later; and first commercial carrier United Healthcare (UHC) in 2019.

Services that cannot be split/shared include consult services (99241-99245), any E&M visit furnished in a skilled nursing facility or nursing facility, or any E&M visit furnished in a patient’s home or domicile.

Excerpt from [MEDDATA E&M Documentation & Consult Crosswalk Worksheet](#):

EVALUATION & MANAGEMENT (E&M) DOCUMENTATION & CONSULT CROSSWALK WORKSHEET										
OUTPATIENT - with consult crosswalk										
History	Exam	Med Dec	New \odot	V	Established \neq	V	Non Gov Consults	Gov	V	
PF	PF	SF	<input type="checkbox"/> 99201	0.48	<input type="checkbox"/> 99212	0.48	<input type="checkbox"/> 99241*	**	0.64	
EF	EF	SF	<input type="checkbox"/> 99202	0.93			<input type="checkbox"/> 99242*	**	1.34	
EF	EF	LC			<input type="checkbox"/> 99213	0.97		**		
D	D	LC	<input type="checkbox"/> 99203	1.42			<input type="checkbox"/> 99243*	**	1.88	
D	D	MC			<input type="checkbox"/> 99214	1.50		**		
C	C	MC	<input type="checkbox"/> 99204	2.43			<input type="checkbox"/> 99244*	**	3.02	
C	C	HC	<input type="checkbox"/> 99205	3.17	<input type="checkbox"/> 99215	2.11	<input type="checkbox"/> 99245*	**	3.77	
Initial Prev Phys Exam (IPPE)			<input type="checkbox"/> G0402	2.43						
Annual Wellness Visit (AWV)			<input type="checkbox"/> G0438	2.43	<input type="checkbox"/> G0439	1.50				
<p>NOTES:</p> <p>* Consult codes <u>not</u> payable by Gov carriers: MCR after 01/2010, LA MCD after 7/2012, (includes MCR Advantage and LA BHP and some Workers' Comp carriers)</p> <p>** 99241-99245 Office/outpatient change to 99201-99215 (or 99281-99285 if ED), (depending on POS and New vs Est Patient).</p> <p>◆ 99251-99252: Inpatient change to 99231-99232.</p> <p>◆ 99253-99255: MCR only to: 99221-99223, Special Key Code: 221C-223C, LA MCD to: 99233. Code selection as supported by documentation.</p> <p>⊕ Nursing Facilities, i.e., NF (31), SNF (31), and/or LTAC (31) CPT codes 99304-99306 use the same crosswalk for consultation codes, i.e., MCR 99304 for 99221, 99305 for 99222, and 99306 for 99223. LA MCD presumes all inpatient consults will crosswalk to 99231-99233.</p> <p>⊕ MEDTRON added special 'key' codes with no built-in modifier <AI> for Consults.</p> <p>● MCR only, true admitting physician to add modifier AI to codes 99221-99223.</p> <p>⊙ = 99234-99236 observation or inpatient care, same day admit and discharge. Requires 3 of the 3 components.</p>										
INPATIENT (NEW OR ESTABLISHED) - with consult crosswalk \neq										
History	Exam	Med Dec	Initial \odot	V	Subsequent \neq	V	Non Gov Consults	MCD	MCR	V
PF	PF	SF			<input type="checkbox"/> 99231	0.76	<input type="checkbox"/> 99251◆ →	231	231	1.00
EF	EF	MC			<input type="checkbox"/> 99232	1.39				
EF	EF	SF					<input type="checkbox"/> 99252◆ →	232	232	1.50
D	D	SF	<input type="checkbox"/> 99221●	1.92	<input type="checkbox"/> 99234⊙	2.56				
D	D	HC			<input type="checkbox"/> 99233	2.00				
D	D	LC					<input type="checkbox"/> 99253◆ →	233	221C	2.27
C	C	MC	<input type="checkbox"/> 99222●	2.61	<input type="checkbox"/> 99235⊙	3.24	<input type="checkbox"/> 99254◆ →	233	222C	3.29
C	C	HC	<input type="checkbox"/> 99223●	3.86	<input type="checkbox"/> 99236⊙	4.20	<input type="checkbox"/> 99255◆ →	233	223C	4.00
Hospital Discharge 0-30 mins					<input type="checkbox"/> 99238	1.28				
Hospital Discharge 30+ mins					<input type="checkbox"/> 99239	1.90				
Critical Care 30 – 74 mins					<input type="checkbox"/> 99291	4.50				
Critical Care add'l 30 mins					<input type="checkbox"/> 99292x_	2.25				
MEDICARE CROSSWALKS:										
INITIAL HOSPITAL VISIT TO CONSULT EQUIVALENT \odot <True Inpatient MCR Provider of Record; i.e., True admitting provider (see ● above)>										
CPT	V	Time	History	Exam	Medical Decision					
99221	1.92	30	HPI 4; ROS 2-9; PSFH 1	D	Detailed	D	Straight Fwd/Low Comp	SF/LC		
99222	2.60	50	HPI 4; ROS 10; PSFH 3	C	Comprehensive	C	Moderate Complexity	MC		
99223	3.56	70	HPI 4; ROS 10; PSFH 3	C	Comprehensive	C	High Complexity	HC		
99241* / 99251*◆	0.64 / 1.00	15/20	HPI 1; ROS 0; PSFH 0	PF	Problem Focused	PF	Straight Forward	SF		
99242* / 99252*◆	1.34 / 1.50	30/40	HPI 1; ROS 1; PSFH 0	EF	Expanded PF	EF	Straight Forward	SF		
99243* / 99253*◆	1.88 / 2.27	40/55	HPI 4; ROS 2; PSFH 1	D	Detailed	D	Low Complexity	LC		
99244* / 99254*◆	3.02 / 3.29	60/80	HPI 4; ROS 10; PSFH 3	C	Comprehensive	C	Mod Complexity	MC		
99245* / 99255*◆	3.77 / 4.00	80/110	HPI 4; ROS 10; PSFH 3	C	Comprehensive	C	High Complexity	HC		
SUBSEQUENT INPATIENT HOSPITAL CARE TO CONSULT EQUIVALENT \neq										
CPT	V	Time	History	Exam	Medical Decision					
99231◆ / 99251*	0.76 / 1.00	15	HPI 1; ROS 0; PSFH 0	PF	Problem Focused	PF	Straight Fwd/Low Comp	SF/LC		
99232◆ / 99252*	1.39 / 1.50	25	HPI 1; ROS 1; PSFH 0	EF	Expanded PF	EF	Moderate Complexity	MC		
99233◆ / 99253*	2.00 / 2.27	35	HPI 4; ROS 2; PSFH 1	D	Detailed	D	High Complexity	HC		
<p>* ? Lower-level inpatient consult codes (99251-99252) aren't directly comparable to a Level 1 initial hospital care code (99221) therefore no exact crosswalk. The consult codes require only a Problem-Focused (PF) History and Expanded Problem-Focused (EF) Exam while 99221 must have a Detailed (D) or Comprehensive (C) History and Exam.</p>										

Resources:

MDS Evaluation and Management (E&M) General Information Guide

https://www.medtronsoftware.com/User Guides/E&M_Resources/E&M_Information_Packet_General.pdf

UHC Consultation Services Policy

<https://www.uhcprovider.com/content/dam/provider/docs/public/policies/index/oxford/consultation-services-ohp.pdf>

Medicare Claims Processing Manual, Chapter 12

<https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Internet-Only-Manuals-IOMs-Items/CMS018912.html>

Medicare Benefit Policy Manual, Chapter 15

<https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Internet-Only-Manuals-IOMs-Items/CMS012673.html>

Contact MEDTRON's Support Department for assistance or any questions via:

From **MEDPM** or **MEDEHR** Sign On screens, double click on 'support@medtronsoftware.com' to compose an email to the Support Dept.

-OR-

Phone: (985) 234-0599 (local)
(800) 978-0599 (toll free)

-OR-

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