

# PROVIDER BULLETIN

## PROVIDER INFORMATION



November 2, 2020

### **2021 Medicare Product Acupuncture Benefit Changes**

Beginning January 1, 2021, two separate benefits, with separate accumulations, will apply to acupuncture services provided to subscribers enrolled with a Medicare Advantage or Platinum Blue (Medicare Cost) plan.

#### **Medicare Eligible Benefit**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS) announced that acupuncture for low back pain is a covered benefit beginning in January 2020. Twenty acupuncture (20) visits are covered within a rolling 12-month period. Acupuncture services will only be allowed if billed for diagnosis codes listed in NCD 30.3.3. Providers must accurately point the correct diagnosis to each claim line for dates of service in 2021 to apply the appropriate benefit. Acupuncture services pointed to pain diagnoses other than those in NCD 30.3.3 will process under the Supplemental Benefit described below.

#### **Supplemental Benefit**

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota (Blue Cross) will offer a supplemental benefit for acupuncture services for physical pain diagnoses other than low back pain. Acupuncture services for diagnoses unrelated to physical pain will not be covered. Providers must accurately point the correct diagnosis to each claim line for dates of service in 2021 to apply the appropriate benefit. This benefit is limited to 20 visits per calendar year.

#### **Reimbursement Allowance**

The reimbursement for *Medicare eligible* acupuncture for *Medicare Advantage* plans will be as follows:

- Professional claim: the contracted Medicare fee schedule allowance
- Facility claim: contracted Medicare allowance

The reimbursement for *non-Medicare eligible* acupuncture for *Medicare Advantage* plans will be as follows:

- Professional claim: the contracted Medicare fee schedule allowance
- Facility claim: 35% of billed charges based on the provider billing the usual and customary charge

The reimbursement for *Medicare eligible* acupuncture for *Platinum Blue (Medicare Cost)* plans will be as follows:

- Professional claim: the contracted Medicare fee schedule allowance
- Facility claim: Medicare is primary, Blue Cross will coordinate based on Medicare processing

The reimbursement for *non-Medicare eligible* acupuncture for *Platinum Blue (Medicare Cost)* plans will be as follows:

- Professional claim: the contracted commercial fee schedule allowance
- Facility claim: 100% of billed charges based on the provider billing the usual and customary charge

#### **Eligible providers**

Must be under supervision of a licensed Physician; Independent Acupuncturists are not covered. Physicians *as defined in 1861(r)(1) of the Social Security Act (the Act)* may furnish acupuncture in accordance with applicable state requirements.

*Physician assistants (PAs), nurse practitioners (NPs)/clinical nurse specialists (CNSs) (as identified in 1861(aa)(5) of the Act), and auxiliary personnel may furnish acupuncture if they meet all applicable state requirements and have:*

- a masters or doctoral level degree in acupuncture or Oriental Medicine from a school accredited by the Accreditation Commission on Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM); and,
- a current, full, active, and unrestricted license to practice acupuncture in a State, Territory, or Commonwealth (i.e. Puerto Rico) of the United States, or District of Columbia.
- Auxiliary personnel furnishing acupuncture must be under the appropriate level of supervision of a physician, PA, or NP/CNS required by our regulations at 42 CFR §§ 410.26 and 410.27.

### **Questions?**

If you have questions, please contact provider services at **(651) 662-5200** or **1-800-262-0820**.