

National correct coding initiative implementation notice

Effective January 1, 2015, Amerigroup Community Care will implement the National Correct Coding Initiative (NCCI) standard claim edits developed for outpatient claims by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

What is the impact of this change?

Claims adjudicated on or after January 1, 2015, will be processed using NCCI standard claim edits. This change complies with the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act signed into law in March 2010. The coding edits may affect the following claims:

- Professional and outpatient facility claims submitted on the CMS-1500 form
- Outpatient facility claims submitted on the UB-04 (CMS-1450) form

The NCCI edits apply regardless of the format in which a claim is submitted (e.g., paper, electronic or Web-based submissions).

The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (after follow-up with CMS) has determined that Health Services Cost Review Commission rate-regulated hospitals can only be subject to the coding edits for outpatient services designated for hospitals that are exempt from the Medicare Hospital Outpatient Prospective Payment System (OPPS). These edits are marked with a Y in the column headed Non OPPS Hosp. on pages 12-13 of the Integrated Outpatient Code Editor CMS Specifications document. This document can be found on the CMS website at cms.gov > Medicare > Outpatient Code Editor (OCE) > Downloads.

What is the reason for this change?

NCCI edits the number of units billed on the same day. The same will apply for those procedures in which Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) allows no more than one unit of service per day. Providers should continue to report services with the most comprehensive CPT codes that describe the services being performed. Multiple codes should not be used when a single, comprehensive code is available. Incidental procedures not bundled in another service are not separately payable.

Provider use of NCCI modifiers to indicate a procedure or service as distinct, separate or independent from other services performed on the same day will be monitored. NCCI modifiers should not be used to bypass an edit unless the proper criteria for use of the modifiers are met. Providers are required to document use of modifiers within the medical record and must clearly explain the reason modifiers were used.

What if I need assistance?

For more information regarding proper use of modifiers and correct coding, please visit the CMS NCCI website at cms.gov > Medicare > National Correct Coding Initiative Edits. Amerigroup is committed to working with you to ensure timely processing and payment of claims. If you have questions after reviewing the Frequently Asked Questions section below, please call 1-800-454-3730.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Will claims be rejected or denied if they do not comply with NCCI methodology?

A: Yes, claims that do not comply with NCCI methodology may either reject or deny; see the following explanation codes that could appear on your explanation of payment.

Explanation code	Description	CMS edit number
N72	Units of service exceed Medically Unlikely Edit (MUE) limit	15
c06	Maximum daily allowance exceeded	15

Q: Can I dispute a claim that has been denied for NCCI noncompliance?

A: Yes, you may dispute a claim denial in this situation. Please follow the appropriate Amerigroup dispute process as outlined in our provider manual. You may also find this information at providers.amerigroup.com/MD.

Q: How can I review whether an edit will apply before I submit a claim?

A: Amerigroup uses Clear Claim Connection, a tool available for providers at providers.amerigroup.com/MD.

Q: What kind of edits can I expect?

A: NCCI consists of procedure-to-procedure edits and MUEs. These edits are applied to services performed by the same provider on the same date of service only; they do not apply to services performed within the global surgical period. You can find the list of NCCI and MUEs at www.cms.gov/MedicaidNCCICoding/06_NCCIandMUEEdits.asp.

Thank you for being a part of the Amerigroup network. We appreciate the quality health care you provide your patients – our members.