

Medicare Medical Necessity Guide for Laboratory Procedures

Introduction:

The Medicare Medical Necessity Guide is designed to help providers comply with coverage requirements of the Medicare program. Providers must follow these policies in order to submit clean claims, avoid denials and properly obtain an ABN (Advance Beneficiary Notice) when needed.

Volume I: National Coverage Determinations (NCDs)

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) originally implemented 27 NCDs specific to commonly ordered laboratory procedures. Volume I of this guide contains these 27 policies as well as other NCDs implemented since that original publication, to provide you with a current, comprehensive list of NCDs in relation to laboratory procedures.

All Medicare providers must comply with NCDs regardless of their location.

Volume II: Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs)

Local Medicare contractors also have implemented policies called Local Coverage Determinations. Medicare contractors are permitted to publish and implement any LCDs that do not conflict with NCDs created by CMS.

The information in Volume II applies to all providers in Nebraska.

Format:

The following guide provides National Coverage Determination (NCD) policies and Local Coverage Determination (LCD) policies in the format listed below:

- CPT code and descriptor
- Frequency limitations
- Related information as applicable
- Covered diagnosis (ICD-9) codes

Frequency Limitations:

Some coverage policies contain frequency limitations. This information varies greatly from one test to another. Be careful to always check for frequency limitations when using this guide to obtain coverage policy information. If no frequency limitations are included in a particular policy, the frequency limitation section will contain the word, “none”.

Covered ICD-9 Codes:

All covered ICD-9 codes are listed at the highest specificity. All fourth and fifth digits are included in the lists of covered ICD-9 codes. By listing each ICD-9 code to its highest specificity (fourth and fifth digits), this guide eliminates as much confusion as possible and ensures that the user is aware of all covered ICD-9 codes. Although this format may result in lengthy lists of covered ICD-9 codes for some tests and procedures, it is the best way to ensure the user has access to all covered ICD-9 codes.

Questions:

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at the Nebraska LabLinc Call Center: (402) 484-LINC (5462) or (866) 886-LINC (5462).