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# SPECIAL BULLETIN

FOR PROFESSIONAL PROVIDERS

OCT. 4, 2016

**ATTN: ANESTHESIOLOGISTS AND NURSE  
ANESTHESIOLOGISTS**

## REMINDER: ANESTHESIA REIMBURSEMENT CHANGE EFFECTIVE OCT. 15, 2016

As you know, Highmark currently pays anesthesiologists for the units of anesthesia that are used and for the time it takes the anesthesiologist to administer anesthesia to the patient. This consists of systematically rounding minutes billed to the next time unit (15 minutes).

**Effective Oct. 15, 2016**, and as previously communicated via NaviNet®, anesthesiologists will be paid for the **actual time** spent with a patient. For example, an anesthesiologist that spends 16 minutes administering anesthesia to a patient will be paid for 16 minutes. This method of payment is consistent with many other insurers.

It's important to note that Highmark is not changing the payment for the units of anesthesia used or the specific fee (anesthesia conversion factor) that is paid to anesthesiologists. The only change is for the time it takes the anesthesiologist to administer anesthesia.

Please note that this change applies only to Highmark commercial plan members. **Medicare Advantage members are not included at this time**, due to our existing contracts with Medicare.

By following these industry standards and best practices for anesthesia reimbursement, we can help ensure that our members are receiving the appropriate level of care, which, in turn, increases patient safety and improves health outcomes.