Highmark Reimbursement Policy Bulletin

Bulletin Number: RP-013
Subject: Electrocardiogram and Medical Imaging Interpretation
Effective Date: July 3, 2017
End Date: 
Issue Date: December 1, 2017
Source: Reimbursement Policy

Applicable Commercial Market
PA ❑ WV ❑ DE ❑

Applicable Medicare Advantage Market
PA ❑ WV ❑

Applicable Claim Type
UB ❑ 1500 ❑

Reimbursement Policy designation of Professional or Facility application is respective to how the provider is contracted with The Plan. Provider contractual agreements supersede Reimbursement Policy direction and regional applicability.

REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES:

Electrocardiogram (ECG/EKG) Interpretation

Payment will not be made for an attending physician's interpretation of an ECG subsequent to an interpretation by another physician who has been paid to read the ECG when the condition being treated is of a non-emergency nature. The reinterpretation of an ECG is considered a comprehensive part of the attending physician's medical care.

However, if the patient's condition warrants an immediate interpretation of an ECG (emergency treatment -ET modifier), payment can be made to the attending or admitting physician even when a hospital staff physician also performs an ECG interpretation.

Medical Imaging Interpretation

Payment will be made for only one interpretation of any given x-ray, CT, MRI, or Ultrasound with consideration of a second interpretation (which may be identified through the use of modifier 77) be made only if unusual circumstances are documented by the provider. When reporting the professional component of a medical imaging study, the provider must provide a complete interpretation of the medical imaging study which includes a detailed written report of the results for the patient's records.

A re-interpretation by another physician is considered a comprehensive part of that physician's medical care. It is not eligible as a separate and distinct service under these circumstances.

However, if the patient's condition warrants an immediate interpretation of an imaging study (emergency treatment -ET modifier), payment can be made to the attending or admitting physician even when a hospital staff physician also performs an imaging study interpretation.

This policy position applies to all commercial and/or Medicare Advantage lines of business as indicated above. Reimbursement policies are intended only to establish general guidelines for reimbursement under Highmark plans. Highmark retains the right to review and update its reimbursement policy guidelines at its sole discretion.
Medicare Advantage Provision

The Plan reimburses the services outlined in this policy in accordance with CMS Manual Pub.100-4, Chapter 12, Section 20.3 and Chapter 13, Section 100.1.

ADDITIONAL BILLING INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES:

- CMS Manual Pub.100-4, Chapter 12, Section 20.3 and Chapter 13, Section 100.1.