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SPECIAL BULLETIN

FOR PROFESSIONAL PROVIDERS

FEB 14, 2017

CLAIMS PROCESSING UPDATE TO IMPACT MODIFIER 25 AND MODIFIER 59 (EVALUATION & MANAGEMENT AND PHYSICAL MEDICINE SERVICES)

Effective Feb. 13, 2017, Highmark will implement new programming to help identify medical codes that should not be paid together, such as evaluations and physical medicine services, per our medical policies and industry standards. The affected codes are for evaluation and management services (Modifier 25) and for physical medicine services (Modifier 59), and the change will be applicable to our Commercial plans in Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Delaware.

BACKGROUND

CMS guidelines, industry standards, and our medical policies state that evaluation and management codes should not be routinely submitted with any physical medicine service codes at the same time and same day for the same member. Highmark will therefore be more closely matching National Correct Coding Initiative (NCCI) guidelines created by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) as a basis for Modifier 25 and 59 edit adjustments in our claims processing system. Processes will be in place to ensure that services that indeed require Modifier 25 or 59 will be correctly reimbursed.

Over, please

Separate Evaluation and Management (E&M) service must be medically necessary, reported at a clinically appropriate level based on decision making of medical complexity and be documented in the patient's medical records for review through routine post payment appeal processes. Therefore when Level 4 and Level 5 E&M services are reported with Modifier 25 and physical medicine or manipulation services, the E&M service will not be reimbursed.

WHAT PROVIDERS NEED TO KNOW

- Effective with claims received on/after Feb. 13, 2017, for Commercial claims, Highmark will no longer bypass incompatible code pairings in accordance with medical policy and CMS NCCI direction regarding such pairings and the use of override Modifiers 25, 59, XE, XP, XS and XU.
- Please be sure to share this information with your billing staff and/or vendor.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping to keep the focus on our members and group employers.