

WPS CERT Error Rate Update

Wisconsin Physicians Service (WPS) Medicare is strongly committed to the CMS goal of reducing the national Comprehensive Error Rate Testing (CERT) paid claims error rate. As one of the larger Medicare contractors, we recognize our responsibility to achieve further reductions in order to have an impact on the error rate at a national level.

In the past year, we have seen further improvement in our CERT error rate as a carrier. With the release of CMS' 2007 May (Mid-Year) Improper Medicare FFS Payments Report, our CERT paid claims error rate dropped to 3.7%. This remains below the carrier national average of 4.8%. The below table further illustrates our error rate reductions in the past year, compared to the national average of all other Medicare Contractors.

Type of Contractor	May-06	Nov-06	May-07
WPS	4.3%	4.2%	3.7%
Carrier	6.0%	5.0%	4.8%
DMERC	7.8%	7.5%	10.0%
FI	3.5%	2.3%	1.4%
QIOs	5.3%	4.9%	5.0%
All Medicare FFS Contractors	5.1%	4.4%	4.2%

Analysis of the types of errors that attributed to WPS' error rate showed that incorrect coding issues continue to have a large impact on our overall error rate. Incorrect coding errors are most commonly associated with Evaluation and Management (E/M) services, and are most frequently assessed because the level of service billed to Medicare was not documented in the medical records. Please see the below chart which summarizes the percent of total dollars improperly allowed by error category and contractor type, in comparison to WPS, for claims in the 2007 May (Mid-Year) FFS Report.

Type of Error	2007 May (Mid-Year) FFS Improper Payments Report					
	Total	Carrier	WPS	DMERC	FI	QIO
No Documentation Errors	0.6%	0.3%	0.4%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Insufficient Documentation Errors	0.5%	0.3%	1.3%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%
Medically Unnecessary Errors	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	1.3%
Incorrect Coding Errors	1.5%	0.7%	1.9%	0.0%	0.2%	0.6%
Other Errors	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Improper Payments	4.2%	1.4%	3.7%	0.4%	0.4%	2.0%

Although we continue to make improvements in our CERT error rate, we must strive for further reductions. In order to accomplish this goal, it is crucial that providers in our jurisdiction comply with CERT requests for medical records in a timely manner and submit documentation that supports the service(s) billed to Medicare, including the level of care and medical necessity.

For a complete copy of the 2007 May (Mid-Year) Improper Medicare FFS Payments Report referenced above, and past reports, please visit the CMS CERT Reports Website at:

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/CERT/CR/list.asp#TopOfPage>

For more information regarding the CERT program and other issues related to CERT review findings, please visit our Website at:

<http://www.wpsmedicare.com/provider/cert.shtml>

If you have questions related to the CERT process or a specific CERT sampled claim, you may e-mail us at **medicareadmin@wpsic.com**. Be sure to include "CERT Question" in the subject line. Please also include your full name, telephone number, and Provider Identification Number (if available) in the body of the e-mail. This will assure a prompt and accurate reply to your question.

When e-mailing WPS Medicare, please do not include sensitive information. If your question pertains to a specific claim, include the Internal Control Number, not your patient's Medicare Health Insurance Claim Number.