

BWC Policy Alert

2016 BWC Coding Clarification, Proper Coding of Qualitative and Quantitative Drug Screens

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Purpose

This BWC policy alert clarifies the Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) codes and reimbursement rates that providers are to use for the payment of qualitative and quantitative drug screens. The *Drug Testing policy* and procedure (MP-21-01) provides detailed information.

Issue

Effective Jan. 1, 2016, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) replaced HCPCS codes G0431, G0434 and G6058. Providers used these codes to seek reimbursement from BWC for drug testing.

Discussion

As of Jan. 1, 2016, BWC replaced HCPCS codes G0431, G0434 and G6058 with new HCPCS codes for testing for both qualitative drug screens (codes G0477, G0478 and G0479) and quantitative drug screens (codes G0480 and G0481).

BWC will only reimburse for the new HCPCS codes listed above.

Furthermore, BWC will no longer reimburse for the discontinued HCPCS codes (i.e., G0431, G0434 and G6058) for drug screens reflecting dates of services on or after Jan. 1, 2016. Providers using discontinued HCPCS codes must re-submit the request for reimbursement using the appropriate new HCPCS codes, listed above.

Qualitative drug screens

Effective Jan. 1, 2016, qualitative HCPCS codes G0477, G0478 and G0479 that identify the presence or absence of a chemical substance in a drug test specimen replaced HCPCS codes G0431 and G0434. BWC will only allow reimbursement for one qualitative drug screen test per day, regardless of the number of supplies used, drug classes screened or procedures. Providers must choose the appropriate code according to the services provided pursuant to the descriptions below.

- HCPCS code G0479 replaces HCPCS code G0431.
 - o Reports for any number of drug classes and any number of devices or procedures using instrumented chemistry analyzers such as immunoassay, enzyme assay, time of flight, matrix assisted laser desorption/ionization, laser diode thermal desorption, desorption electrospray ionization, direct analysis in real time, gel permeation chromatography and gas chromatography mass spectrometry
 - o Includes sample validation
- HCPCS codes G0477 and G0478 replace HCPCS code G0434. **Note:** CMS broke HCPCS code G0434 into two codes to offer a more appropriate reimbursement and to decipher between direct optical observations and instrument assisted direct optical observations.
 - o HCPCS code G0477
 - Reports for any number of drug classes and any number of devices or procedures, that **direct optical observation only** (e.g., dipsticks, cups, cards, cartridges) can read
 - Includes sample validation

- o HCPCS code G0478

- Reports for any number of drug classes and any number of devices or procedures that an **instrument-assisted direct optical observation** (e.g., dipsticks, cups, cards, cartridges) read
- Includes sample validation

Providers must submit information that identifies the instrument used in the testing billed under HCPCS code G0478.

Quantitative drug screens

As of Jan. 1, 2016, quantitative HCPCS codes G0480 and G0481 replaced HCPCS code G6058. These HCPCS codes quantify the amount of a chemical substance in a drug test specimen.

BWC chose HCPCS codes G0480 and G0481 because it limits the number of drug classes BWC accepts during the screening process. BWC currently allows 10 drug class tests, per the amount of classes tested. Providers have the option to use either HCPCS code G0480 (i.e., test one to seven drug classes) or HCPCS code G0481 (i.e., test eight to 14 drug classes).

For clarification purposes, under *Drug Testing policy* and procedure (MP-21-01), BWC will not reimburse for HCPCS codes G0482 (i.e., test 15-21 drug classes) and G0483 (i.e., test 22 or more drug classes).

BWC will only allow reimbursement for one HCPCS quantitative code (i.e., G0480 or G0481) per day, regardless of the number of supplies used, drug classes screened and/or procedures. Providers will choose a HCPCS code based on the number of drug classes tested. In addition, providers may only bill one of the two quantitative drug screen codes per day. Descriptions of the new quantitative HCPCS codes are described below.

- HCPCS code G0480
 - o Reports for **tests involving one to seven drug class(es)**, including metabolite(s) if performed
 - o Uses methods able to identify individual drugs and distinguish between structural isomers (but not necessarily stereoisomers), including, but not limited to, gas chromatography mass spectrometry (i.e., any type, single or tandem) and liquid chromatography mass spectrometry (i.e., any type, single or tandem and excluding immunoassays and enzymatic methods)
 - o Reports for qualitative or quantitative, all sources(s), including specimen validity testing;
 - o Billed at one unit per date of service regardless of the number of drug classes being tested (i.e., within the range of one to seven)
- HCPCS code G0481
 - o Reports for **tests involving 8-14 drug class(es)**, including metabolite(s) if performed
 - o Uses methods able to identify individual drugs and distinguish between structural isomers (but not necessarily stereoisomers), including, but not limited to, gas chromatography mass spectrometry (i.e., any type, single or tandem) and liquid chromatography mass spectrometry (i.e., any type, single or tandem and excluding immunoassays and enzymatic methods)
 - o Reports for qualitative or quantitative, all sources(s), including specimen validity testing
 - o Billed at one unit per date of service regardless of the number of drug classes being tested (i.e., within the range of eight to 14)

Conclusion

As of Jan. 1, 2016, BWC no longer authorizes reimbursement to providers who seek payment for drug screens billed under HCPCS codes G0431, G0434 and G6058. BWC only reimburses providers for drug screens billed under HCPCS qualitative and quantitative codes, G0477, G0478, G0479, G0480 or G0481, once per day, regardless of the number of supplies used, drug classes screened and/or procedures.

Location: <http://www.ohiobwc.com/provider/services/FeeSchedules.asp>

References

2016 Expert *HCPCS Level II*

Ohio Administrative Code 4123-6-08 Bureau fee schedule

Drug Testing, MP-21-01

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