



## Diablo Medical Billing, Inc.

# INFORMANT



## Medicare Audits and your Chart Notes

As you all know, determining the level of E&M service to bill is based on three components – history, exam, and Medical Decision Making. For a new patient, you must meet the criteria in all three components to get to a level of service. For established patients, you only need to meet two. One of the areas now under scrutiny from CMS is the medical decision making component, which is probably the hardest to document! Of course, the primary factor in determining a level

of service is medical necessity, and just because you do a high level exam and history does not make it medically necessary.

Look for potential MDM-boosting factors, including chronic conditions that may affect the present illness, the need for diagnostic tests and the plan of care you determine. List the complicating factors in your notes. Consider various management options, and document which one you are choosing as well as

the expected outcome and possible options if the outcome is not successful. Consider the complexity of the patient when choosing your level of MDM. And, most importantly, DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT!



### TIPS FOR MAXIMUM REIMBURSEMENT:

- ✓ It is important that insurance benefits are verified ahead of the patient's appointment time, and patients are called the day before an appointment to remind them to bring any necessary documents (e.g. insurance card(s), diagnostic reports, referrals).
- ✓ Ask patients at every visit if they have had a change in address, phone number or insurance.
- ✓ Make sure that the patient information sheets are legible and have all the necessary information. If you cannot read what the patient wrote, chances are, we won't be able to either. Most likely, claims will be denied if we have the wrong date of birth or insurance identification number.

The following is a chart that might help you in calculating the correct number of elements for MDM:

# of dx or management options	Amt and/or complexity of data to review	Risk of complications	Type of Medical Decision Making
Minimal (1 minor or stable)	Minimal- 0-1 Data set	Minimal	Straightforward- Needed for 99212
Limited (2 minor or stable OR 1 unstable)	Limited – 2 data sets	Low- OTC drugs,	Low – Needed for 99213
Multiple (1 new problem w/no addt'l work-up OR >1 problem, with one being unstable)	Moderate- 3 data sets	Moderate- Includes prescription drug management	Moderate – Needed for 99214
Extensive (1 new problem w/addt'l work-up OR >1 problem w/at least 1 being new)	Extensive – 4 data sets	High	High – Needed for 99215