

Services by Unlicensed Residents and Medical Students Policy, Professional

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT THIS REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

You are responsible for submission of accurate claims. This reimbursement policy is intended to ensure that you are reimbursed based on the code or codes that correctly describe the health care services provided. UnitedHealthcare Community Plan reimbursement policies uses Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) or other coding guidelines. References to CPT or other sources are for definitional purposes only and do not imply any right to reimbursement.*

This reimbursement policy applies to all health care services billed on CMS 1500 forms and, when specified, to those billed on UB04 forms. Coding methodology, industry-standard reimbursement logic, regulatory requirements, benefits design and other factors are considered in developing reimbursement policy.

This information is intended to serve only as a general reference resource regarding UnitedHealthcare Community Plan's reimbursement policy for the services described and is not intended to address every aspect of a reimbursement situation. Accordingly, UnitedHealthcare Community Plan may use reasonable discretion in interpreting and applying this policy to health care services provided in a particular case. Further, the policy does not address all issues related to reimbursement for health care services provided to UnitedHealthcare Community Plan enrollees.

Other factors affecting reimbursement supplement, modify or, in some cases, supersede this policy. These factors include, but are not limited to: federal &/or state regulatory requirements, the physician or other provider contracts, the enrollee's benefit coverage documents, and/or other reimbursement, medical or drug policies.

Finally, this policy may not be implemented exactly the same way on the different electronic claims processing systems used by UnitedHealthcare Community Plan due to programming or other constraints; however, UnitedHealthcare Community Plan strives to minimize these variations.

UnitedHealthcare Community Plan may modify this reimbursement policy at any time by publishing a new version of the policy on this Website. However, the information presented in this policy is accurate and current as of the date of publication.

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Application

This reimbursement policy applies to UnitedHealthcare Community Plan Medicaid products.

This reimbursement policy applies to services reported using the either the 1500 Health Insurance Claim Form (a/k/a CMS-1500) or the electronic equivalent or its successor form. This policy applies to all products and all network and non-network physicians and other qualified health care professionals, including, but not limited to, non-network authorized and percent of charge contract physicians and other qualified health care professionals.

Policy

Overview

This policy describes the reimbursement of services rendered by unlicensed residents, interns and medical students as identified by the Healthcare Provider Taxonomy Code reported on the claim. This policy also addresses how reimbursement for services by unlicensed residents and interns will be considered when billed with an appropriate modifier to indicate covered services were rendered under the direction of a teaching physician, or without the presence of a teaching physician under the Primary Care Exception.

Reimbursement Guidelines

Health Care Provider Taxonomy Code Set

According to the National Uniform Claim Committee (NUCC), the Health Care Provider Taxonomy code set levels are organized to allow for drilling down to the provider's most specific level of specialization. The 10-digit codes for each provider category are unique.

The codes and categories are to be used exactly as they are assigned in the Taxonomy list.

The taxonomy code for medical students is 390200000X, “Student in an Organized Health Care Education/Training Program.” This code can be used by an individual who is enrolled in an organized health care education/training program leading to a degree, certification, registration, and/or licensure to provide health care. This code is reported on the CMS 1500 claim in Box 24J (servicing provider) or the electronic equivalent.

Consistent with CMS, Unitedhealthcare Community Plan will not reimburse services rendered by unlicensed Residents, interns, and medical students as identified by the Healthcare Provider Taxonomy Code reported on the claim. Services performed by medical students and interns who do not fall within the scope of the CMS definition of “Resident” are not reimbursable. To be considered for reimbursement, a teaching physician must re-perform the services and can then bill for those services under their own NPI.

General Documentation Guidelines

Teaching physicians must personally document that they performed the service or were physically present during key or critical portions of the service and their participation in the management of the patient. The physician may refer to the resident’s documentation; however, a statement by the attending (teaching) physician is required and must include independent documentation to correspond with the resident/ 's documentation. Without such documentation, no reimbursement can be made.

Claim Submission Guidelines

Claims for services by unlicensed residents and interns will be considered for reimbursement when appended with modifiers GC or GE and will not be denied. According to CMS, these modifiers indicate services were rendered in part by a resident or intern under the direction of a teaching physician, or they were performed by a resident or intern without the presence of a teaching physician under the Primary Care Exception, respectively. Claims for services rendered by an unlicensed resident or intern that do not include modifier GC or GE are not reimbursable and will be denied.

State Exceptions

Arizona	Per state guidelines, health plan is excluded from policy.
Indiana	Per state guidelines, health plan is excluded from policy.
Kansas	Per state guidelines, health plan is excluded from policy.
Kentucky	Per state guidelines, health plan is excluded from policy.
Mississippi	Per state guidelines, health plan is excluded from policy.
Nebraska	Per state guidelines, health plan is excluded from policy.
New Jersey	Per state guidelines, health plan is excluded from policy.
Tennessee	Per state guidelines, health plan is excluded from policy.
Texas	Per state guidelines, health plan is excluded from policy.

Definitions

Physically Present	The teaching physician is located in the same room (or partitioned or curtained area, if the room is subdivided to accommodate multiple patients) as the patient and/or performs a face-to-face service.
Primary Care Exception	An exception within an approved Graduate Medical Education (GME) Program that applies to limited situations when the resident is the primary caregiver and the faculty physician sees the patient only in a consultative role

	(that is, those residency programs with requirements that are incompatible with a physical presence requirement). In such programs, it is beneficial for the resident to see patients without supervision to learn medical decision making.
Resident	An individual who participates in an approved GME program or a physician who is not in an approved GME program but who is authorized to practice only in a hospital setting.
Student	An individual who participates in an accredited educational program (e.g., a medical school) that is not an approved GME program. A student is never considered to be an intern or a resident.
Teaching Physician	A physician (other than another resident) who involves residents in the care of their patients.
Teaching Hospital	A hospital engaged in an approved GME residency program in medicine, osteopathy, dentistry, or podiatry.

Questions and Answers

1	<p>Q: What if a teaching physician is not involved with any part of a patient's care?</p> <p>A: No services may be reported on a CMS-1500 claim, as UnitedHealthcare is aligning with CMS on and after Jan. 1, 2022 and will not pay for services furnished by an unlicensed resident/intern where a teaching physician was not involved with any part of the care (except in the case of the primary care exception and these services would be reported with modifier GE).</p>
2	<p>Q: What happens when the unlicensed resident/intern/medical student becomes licensed?</p> <p>A: When the healthcare provider becomes licensed, they need to update their taxonomy code, after which this policy will no longer apply. Outreach to UnitedHealthcare is also necessary to update records/credentialing.</p>

History

01/01/2022	Policy Implemented by UnitedHealthcare Community Plan
9/16/2021	Policy approved by Reimbursement Policy Oversight Committee

Resources

Individual state Medicaid regulations, manuals & fee schedules

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS Manual System and other CMS publications and services

National Uniform Claim Committee (NUCC)