

As part of our Valor DoctorCare™ Program, we are providing procedure and diagnosis coding and reimbursement information for physician and nurse practitioner (NP) services in palliative and hospice care. Coding for services, whether the patient is enrolled under the Medicare hospice benefit or receives health care services through other funding mechanisms, almost always uses the same coding techniques. Physicians and nurse practitioners code for their service to an individual patient in two parts: 1) a procedure or service code and 2) a diagnosis code. Please ensure adequate documentation is included.

PHYSICIANS

Please refer to our Valor DoctorCare Program *Physician Billing Guide* for mechanics of Physician billing services.

NURSE PRACTITIONERS (NP)

The mechanics of Physician billing are the same for a Nurse Practitioner (NP). There are state-by-state variations in requirements for documentation, supervision and scope of practice.

Payment cannot be made for NP services that can be performed by a registered nurse. The only payment that can be made for services of an NP is made for services furnished in the role of attending physician. Only services of the NP acting as an attending physician are covered. In addition, NPs are prohibited from certifying terminal illness and establishing the plan of care, since both require a physician specifically. Other advance practice nurses, such as certified nurse midwives, clinical nurse specialists and certified registered nurse anesthetists, cannot bill for serving as an attending physician.

NURSE PRACTITIONERS NOT EMPLOYED BY A HOSPICE

Nurse Practitioners not employed by a hospice and serving as an attending physician, bill Medicare, Part B. The GV modifier is used when services are related to the terminal illness; a GW modifier is used when services are not related to the terminal illness. Failure to use either one of these modifiers will result in the claim being denied.

NURSE PRACTITIONERS EMPLOYED BY A HOSPICE

Hospices bill Medicare, Part A, for NPs who are employed by the hospice and serving as an attending physician. Hospice bills, using revenue code 0657, along with the modifier GV. Medicare pays 85% of the fee schedule amount for the NP services.