



New Positron Emission Tomography (PET) Radiopharmaceutical/Tracer Unclassified Codes

MLN Matters Number: MM10319

Related Change Request (CR) Number: 10319

Related CR Release Date: November 9, 2017 Effective Date: January 1, 2018

Related CR Transmittal Number: R3911CP Implementation Date: December 11, 2017
– MACs; April 2, 2018 - FISS, 2018

PROVIDER TYPES AFFECTED

This MLN Matters Article is intended for physicians, providers, and suppliers billing Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) for services provided to Medicare beneficiaries.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Positron Emission Tomography (PET) is a nuclear medicine imaging study used to detect normal and abnormal tissues. All PET scan services are billed using PET or PET/ Computed Tomography (CT) Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) codes 78459, 78491, 78492, 78608, and 78811 through 78816. Each of these CPT codes always requires the use of a radiopharmaceutical code, also known as a tracer code. Therefore, an applicable tracer code, along with an applicable CPT code, is necessary for claims processing of any PET scan services.

While there are a number of PET tracers already billable for a diverse number of medical indications, there have been, and may be in the future, additional PET indications that might require a new PET tracer. Under those circumstances, the process to request/approve/implement a new code could be time-intensive.

To help alleviate inordinate spans of time between when a coverage determination is made and when it can be fully implemented via valid claims processing, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has created two new PET radiopharmaceutical unclassified tracer codes that can be used temporarily pending the creation/approval/implementation of permanent CPT codes that would later specifically define their function.

Effective January 1, 2017, with the January 2017 quarterly Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) update, the two temporary PET HCPCS codes are:

- A9597 - Positron emission tomography radiopharmaceutical, diagnostic, for tumor identification, not otherwise classified

- A9598 - Positron emission tomography radiopharmaceutical, diagnostic, for non-tumor identification, not otherwise classified

Make sure that your billing staffs are aware of these changes.

NOTE: HCPCS codes A9597 and A9598 are NOT to be reported for any CMS approved PET indication where a dedicated PET radiopharmaceutical is already assigned. In other words, HCPCS A9597 and A9598 are not replacements for currently approved PET radiopharmaceuticals A9515, A9526, A9552, A9555, A9580, A9586, A9587, or A9588.

BACKGROUND

Effective with dates of service on or after January 1, 2018, the above two HCPCS codes shall be used ONLY AS NECESSARY FOR AN INTERIM PERIOD OF TIME under the circumstances explained below:

- (1) After U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval of a PET oncologic indication, or,
- (2) after CMS approves coverage of a new PET indication, BUT,

ONLY IF either of the above situations requires the use of a dedicated PET radiopharmaceutical/tracer that is currently non-existent.

Once permanent replacement codes are implemented via a subsequent CMS CR, that subsequent CR will also discontinue use of the temporary code for that PET particular indication.

Effective for claims with dates of service on and after January 1, 2018, MACs will ensure when PET tracer code A9597 or A9598 are present on a claim, that claim must also include:

- An appropriate PET HCPCS code, either 78459, 78491, 78492, 78608, 78811, 78812, 78813, 78814, 78815, or 78816
- If tumor-related, either the -PI or -PS modifier as appropriate
- If clinical trial-, registry-, or study-related outside of NCD220.6.17 PET for solid tumors, clinical trial modifier -Q0
- If Part A outpatient and study-related outside of NCD220.6.17 PET for solid tumors, also include condition code 30 and ICD-10 diagnosis Z00.6
- If clinical trial-, registry-, or study-related, all claims require the 8-digit clinical trial number

Effective for claims with dates of service on and after January 1, 2018, MACs for Part A shall line-item deny and MACs for Part B shall line-item reject, PET claims for A9597 or A9598 that do not include the above elements, as appropriate. When denying or rejecting line items, MACs will use the following remittance messages:

- Remittance Advice Remark Code (RARC) N386
- Claim Adjustment Reason Code (CARC) 50, 96, 16, and/or 119
- Group Code CO (Contractual Obligation) assigning financial liability to the provider

MACs will not search for and adjust previously processed claims but will adjust such claims that you bring to their attention.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The official instruction, CR10319, issued to your MAC regarding this change, is available at <https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Transmittals/2017Downloads/R3911CP.pdf>.

If you have any questions, please contact your MAC at their toll-free number. That number is available at <https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Monitoring-Programs/Medicare-FFS-Compliance-Programs/Review-Contractor-Directory-Interactive-Map/>.

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Date of Change	Description
November 16, 2017	Initial article released.

Disclaimer: This article was prepared as a service to the public and is not intended to grant rights or impose obligations. This article may contain references or links to statutes, regulations, or other policy materials. The information provided is only intended to be a general summary. It is not intended to take the place of either the written law or regulations. We encourage readers to review the specific statutes, regulations and other interpretive materials for a full and accurate statement of their contents. CPT only copyright 2016 American Medical Association. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2017, the American Hospital Association, Chicago, Illinois. Reproduced with permission. No portion of the AHA copyrighted materials contained within this publication may be copied without the express written consent of the AHA. AHA copyrighted materials including the UB-04 codes and descriptions may not be removed, copied, or utilized within any software, product, service, solution or derivative work without the written consent of the AHA. If an entity wishes to utilize any AHA materials, please contact the AHA at 312-893-6816. Making copies or utilizing the content of the UB-04 Manual, including the codes and/or descriptions, for internal purposes, resale and/or to be used in any product or publication; creating any modified or derivative work of the UB-04 Manual and/or codes and descriptions; and/or making any commercial use of UB-04 Manual or any portion thereof, including the codes and/or descriptions, is only authorized with an express license from the American Hospital Association. To license the electronic data file of UB-04 Data Specifications, contact Tim Carlson at (312) 893-6816 or Laryssa Marshall at (312) 893-6814. You may also contact us at ub04@healthforum.com.

The American Hospital Association (the "AHA") has not reviewed, and is not responsible for, the completeness or accuracy of any information contained in this material, nor was the AHA or any of its affiliates, involved in the preparation of this material, or the analysis of information provided in the material. The views and/or positions presented in the material do not necessarily represent the views of the AHA. CMS and its products and services are not endorsed by the AHA or any of its affiliates.