

SAME DAY/SAME SERVICE POLICY

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Related Policies

- [Care Plan Oversight](#)
- [Prolonged Services](#)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

The services described in Oxford policies are subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of the member's contract or certificate. Unless otherwise stated, Oxford policies do not apply to Medicare Advantage members. Oxford reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to modify policies as necessary without prior written notice unless otherwise required by Oxford's administrative procedures or applicable state law. The term Oxford includes Oxford Health Plans, LLC and all of its subsidiaries as appropriate for these policies.

Certain policies may not be applicable to Self-Funded members and certain insured products. Refer to the member specific benefit plan document or Certificate of Coverage to determine whether coverage is provided or if there are any exclusions or benefit limitations applicable to any of these policies. If there is a difference between any policy and the member specific benefit plan document or Certificate of Coverage, the member specific benefit plan document or Certificate of Coverage will govern.

UnitedHealthcare may also use tools developed by third parties, such as the MCG™ Care Guidelines, to assist us in administering health benefits. The MCG™ Care Guidelines are intended to be used in connection with the independent professional medical judgment of a qualified health care provider and do not constitute the practice of medicine or medical advice.

APPLICABLE LINES OF BUSINESS/PRODUCTS

This policy applies to Oxford Commercial plan membership.

APPLICATION

This Reimbursement Policy applies to services reported using the UB-04 claim form, the 1500 Health Insurance Claim Form (a/k/a CMS-1500), or their electronic equivalents or their successor forms. This policy applies to all network and non-network providers, including hospitals, ambulatory surgical centers, 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.

OVERVIEW

The Same Day/Same Service Policy addresses those instances when a single code should be reported by a physician(s), hospital (s), ambulatory surgical center (s) or other health care professional(s) for multiple medical and/or Evaluation and Management (E/M) services for a patient on a single date of service. Generally, a single E/M code should be used to report all services provided for a patient on each given day. Prolonged services and care plan oversight may be exceptions. (See policies titled [Prolonged Services](#) and [Care Plan Oversight](#) for more information.)

For the purpose of this policy, the Same Specialty Physician, Hospital, Ambulatory Surgical Center or Other Health Care Professional is defined as a physician, hospital, ambulatory surgical center and/or health care professional of the same group and same specialty reporting the same Federal Tax Identification number.

REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES

The *Medicare Claims Processing Manual* states:

- "Physicians in the same group practice who are in the same specialty must bill and be paid as though they were a single physician. If more than one evaluation and management (face-to-face) service is provided on the same day to the same patient by the same physician or more than one physician in the same specialty in the same group, only one evaluation and management service may be reported unless the evaluation and management services are for unrelated problems. Instead of billing separately, the physicians should select a level of service representative of the combined visits and submit the appropriate code for that level."
- "Contractors pay a physician for only one hospital visit per day for the same patient, whether the problems seen during the encounters are related or not. The inpatient hospital visit descriptors contain the phrase 'per day' which means that the code and the payment established for the code represent all services provided on that date. The physician should select a code that reflects all services provided during the date of the service."
- "In a hospital inpatient situation involving one physician covering for another, if physician A sees the patient in the morning and physician B, who is covering for A, sees the same patient in the evening, contractors do not pay physician B for the second visit. The hospital visit descriptors include the phrase 'per day' meaning care for the day."
- "If the physicians are each responsible for a different aspect of the patient's care, pay both visits if the physicians are in different specialties and the visits are billed with different diagnoses."

The *National Correct Coding Initiative Policy Manual* states:

- "Procedures should be reported with the most comprehensive CPT code that describes the services performed. Physicians must not unbundle the services described by a HCPCS/CPT code."
- "A physician should not report multiple HCPCS/CPT codes when a single comprehensive HCPCS/CPT code describes these services."

Consistent with Medicare, Oxford's Same Day/Same Service policy recognizes physicians or other health care professionals of the same group and specialty as the same physician, physician subspecialty is not considered. According to correct coding methodology, physicians are to select the code that accurately identifies the service(s) performed. Multiple E/M services, when reported on the same date for the same patient by the same specialty physician, will be subject to edits used by and sourced to third party authorities. As stated above, physicians should select a level of service representative of the combined visits and submit the appropriate code for that level.

Edit Sources

Oxford sources its Same Day Same Service edits to methodologies used and recognized by third party authorities. Those methodologies can be definitive or interpretive. A definitive source is one that is based on very specific instructions from the given source. An interpreted source is one that is based on an interpretation of instructions from the identified source. Please see the edit types section below for further explanations of these sources. The sources used to determine if a Same Day Same Service edit is appropriate are as follows:

- *Current Procedural Terminology Book (CPT®)* from the American Medical Association (AMA);
- CMS National Correct Coding Initiative (CCI) edits;
- CMS Policy; and
- Physician specialty societies (e.g., American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS), American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), American College of Cardiology, and Society of Cardiovascular Interventional Radiology).

Edit Types

The following are edit types that may be applied in the *Same Day Same Service Policy*.

- **CCI Definitive:** An edit sourced to specific billing guidelines from the General Correct Coding Policies contained in the National Correct Coding Policy Manual published by CMS. For example, the Evaluation and Management Services section (chapter xi) specifically states "A physician should not report an 'initial' per diem E&M service with the same type of 'subsequent' per diem service on the same date of service." Oxford will not separately reimburse for an initial and a subsequent per diem service on the same date, such as 99223 and 99232.
- **CMS Definitive:** An edit sourced to a specific billing guideline from CMS. For example, the Medicare Claims Processing Manual states "If the same physician who admitted a patient to observation status also admits the patient to inpatient status from observation before the end of the date on which the patient was admitted to observation, pay only an initial hospital visit for the evaluation and management services provided on that date." Oxford will not separately reimburse for an initial observation care service on the same date as an initial hospital care service, such as 99218 and 99222.
- **CPT Definitive:** An edit sourced to specific CPT® book direction related to the reporting of exact codes or modifiers. For example, the CPT coding book states "Do not report 94002-94004 in conjunction with Evaluation

and Management services 99201-99499." Oxford will not separately reimburse for any service in the range 94002-94004 when reported with any service in the range of 99201-99499.

- **CCI Interpretive:** CMS does not always create a comprehensive set of edits between similar codes because of its target population and certain code sets that it does not recognize. Oxford, however, may include edits which have been created between similar codes based on an interpretation or extrapolation of the existing CCI edits. Examples of these codes include newborn services, preventive medicine services and other CPT and HCPCS codes for which CMS has indicated the code is invalid for Medicare.
- **CMS Interpretive:** The CMS National Correct Coding Initiative Policy Manual cites certain specialty specific services which primarily involve evaluation and management services. When these specialty specific codes are reported, a separate evaluation and management service from the range of CPT codes 99201-99499 should not be reported on the same date of service. Examples of these codes include general and special ophthalmologic services and general and special diagnostic and therapeutic psychiatric services.
- **CPT Interpretive:** Based on Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) code definition, when a service is a component that is necessary to complete the primary service, it is by definition included in the reimbursement of that primary service. Examples of this would be codes that include words or phrases that indicate they include other services. For instance certain evaluation and management codes have descriptions that state "...admission and discharge on the same date..." By definition an initial observation care service or an initial hospital care service would be a component necessary to complete the primary service.

Significant, Separately Identifiable Evaluation and Management Service

According to the CPT® book: "It may be necessary to indicate that on the day a procedure or service identified by a CPT code was performed, the patient's condition required a significant, separately identifiable E/M service above and beyond the other service provided or beyond the usual preoperative and postoperative care associated with the procedure that was performed. A significant, separately identifiable E/M service is defined or substantiated by documentation that satisfies the relevant criteria for the respective E/M service to be reported (see Evaluation and Management Services Guidelines for instructions on determining level of E/M service)..."

Oxford will allow modifier 25 to indicate a significant and separately identifiable E/M service when a second physician in the same group and specialty provides a separate E/M service on the same day for an unrelated problem. However, there are instances when modifier 25 would not be appropriate to report, including but not limited to, reporting two E/M services where one is a "per day" code or reporting separate services when a more comprehensive code exists that describes the services.

DEFINITIONS

Same Specialty Physician, Hospital, Ambulatory Surgical Center or Other Health Care Professional:

Physicians, hospitals, ambulatory surgical centers and/or other health care professionals of the same group and same specialty reporting the same Federal Tax Identification number.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1	Q:	If a patient is seen in the office at 3:00 p.m. and admitted to the hospital at 1:00 a.m. the next day, may both the office visit and the initial hospital care be reported?
	A:	Yes. Because different dates are involved, both codes may be reported. The CPT states services on the same date must be rolled up into the initial hospital care code. The term "same date" does not mean a 24 hour period. Refer to the CPT book for more information.
2	Q:	May a physician report both a hospital visit and hospital discharge day management service on the same day?
	A:	No. The hospital visit descriptors include the phrase "per day" meaning they include all care for a day. Codes 99238-99239 (hospital discharge day management services) are used to report services on the final day of the hospital stay. To report both the hospital visit code and the hospital discharge day management services code would be duplicative.
3	Q:	If a patient is admitted as an inpatient and discharged on the same day, may the hospital discharge day management code be reported?
	A:	No. To report services for a patient who is admitted as an inpatient and discharged on the same day, use only the appropriate code for Observation or Inpatient Care Services (Including Admission and Discharge Services) as described by CPT codes 99234-99236.

4	Q:	May a physician or separate physician of the same group and specialty report multiple hospital visits on the same day for the same patient for unrelated problems?
	A:	No. The inpatient hospital visit descriptors contain the phrase "per day" which means that the code and the payment established for the code represent all services provided on that date. The physician(s) should select a single code that reflects all services provided during the date of the service.
5	Q:	In a hospital inpatient situation involving one physician covering for another, if physician A sees the patient in the morning and physician B, who is covering for A, sees the same patient in the evening, will Oxford pay physician B for the second visit?
	A:	No. The inpatient hospital visit descriptors include the phrase "per day" which means that the code and the payment established for the code represent all services provided on that date. The physician(s) should select a single code that reflects all services provided during the date of the service.
6	Q:	If a physician sees his patient in the emergency room and decides to admit the person to the hospital, should both services (the emergency department visit and the initial hospital visit) be reported?
	A:	No. When the patient is admitted to the hospital via another site of service (e.g., hospital emergency department, physician's office, nursing facility), all services provided by the physician in conjunction with that admission are considered part of the initial hospital care when performed on the same date as the admission.
7	Q:	If a patient is seen for more than one E/M or other medical service on a single date of service, and each service is performed by a physician with a different specialty designation, but in the same group practice, would each E/M or other medical service be separately reimbursable?
	A:	Yes, in certain circumstances. An E/M or other medical service provided on the same date by different physicians who are in a group practice but who have different specialty designations may be separately reimbursable. The Same Day/Same Service policy applies when multiple E/M or other medical services are reported by physicians in the same group and specialty on the same date of service. In that case, only one E/M is separately reimbursable, unless the second service is for an unrelated problem and reported with modifier 25. This would not apply when one of the E/M services is a "per day" code.
8	Q:	If a patient is seen for more than one E/M or other medical service on a single date of service, and each service is performed by a physician of the same group and specialty but with a different subspecialty designation, would each E/M or other medical service be separately reimbursable?
	A:	No. Subspecialty is not considered when applying Reimbursement Policy.

REFERENCES

The foregoing Oxford policy has been adapted from an existing UnitedHealthcare national policy that was researched, developed and approved by UnitedHealthcare Payment Policy Oversight Committee. [2018R0002A]

American Medical Association, Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®), and associated publications and services.

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

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, National Correct Coding Initiative (NCCI) publications.

POLICY HISTORY/REVISION INFORMATION

Date	Action/Description
05/01/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Routine review; no content changes Archived previous policy version ADMINISTRATIVE 174.14 TO