

Billing for Smoking Cessation Counseling Services

Steve DeSaulniers, MA

Behavioral Health Program Manager, Provider Network Services

BlueCross BlueShield of New Mexico

June 19, 2020

Counseling codes covered by NM Medicaid, Medicare and commercial

- 99406** - Smoking and tobacco use cessation counseling visit;
intermediate, greater than **3 minutes up to 10 minutes**
- **Average rates:** Medicaid \$13.37; commercial \$12.66 - \$15.17;
Medicare \$15.10 (no cost-sharing for the member, which means no
copays, coinsurance or deductibles)
- 99407** Smoking and tobacco use cessation counseling visit; intensive,
greater than 10 minutes
- **Average rates:** Medicaid \$26.61; commercial \$24.80 - \$29.35;
Medicare \$29.07 (no cost-sharing for the member, which means no
copays, coinsurance or deductibles)

Medicare Requirements

(similar requirements for NM Medicaid and most commercial plans)

*Contractors shall allow payment for a medically necessary **E/M service on the same day** as the counseling to prevent tobacco use service when it is clinically appropriate. Physicians and qualified non-physician practitioners shall use an appropriate HCPCS code, such as HCPCS 99201– 99215, to report an E/M service **with modifier 25 to indicate that the E/M service is a separately identifiable service from 99406 or 99407.**

Contractors shall only pay for **8 counseling to prevent tobacco use sessions in a 12-month period.** The beneficiary may receive **another 8 sessions during a second or subsequent year after 11 full months have passed since the first Medicare covered counseling session was performed.** To start the count for the second or subsequent 12-month period, begin with the month after the month in which the first Medicare covered counseling session was performed and count until 11 full months have elapsed. **Claims for counseling to prevent tobacco use services shall be submitted with an appropriate diagnosis code.**

Medical records documentation should include:

- The patient's tobacco use
- Advised to quit and impact of smoking
- Assessed willingness to attempt to quit
- Providing methods and skills for cessation
- Medication management of smoking cessation drugs
- Resources provided
- Setting quit date
- Follow-up arranged
- Amount of time spent counseling patient

An entry in the medical record just stating the doctor spent 11 minutes counseling the patient on tobacco use is *not* sufficient.

Prescriptions covered for New Mexico Medicaid

- Nicotine Gum
- Nicotine Patch
- Nicotine Nasal Spray*
- Nicotine Inhaler*
- Nicotine Lozenge
- Chantix*
- Zyban (Wellbutrin, Bupropion)
- Wellbutrin (Zyban, Bupropion)
- Bupropion SR* (Zyban, Wellbutrin)

*Covered by Medicare Part D plans. These plans do *not* cover over-the-counter products i.e. nicotine gum, lozenges and patches

Most commercial plans do *not* cover nonprescription items for smoking and tobacco use cessation such as nicotine patches and nicotine gum or prescription drugs that have over-the-counter equivalents



Questions?