

Medicare Updates

Effective August 12, 2021, despite the ongoing pandemic, CMS has authorized their audit contractors (DME MACs) to reinstate prepayment medical review audits which have been on hold since early March 2020. Prior to the pandemic on January 1, 2020, three core policies regulating the Medicare Surgical Dressing Benefit¹ were updated by the DME MACs². These policies are, Local Coverage Determination (LCD): Surgical Dressings³, Local Coverage Article: Surgical Dressings - Policy Article⁴ and Local Coverage Article: Standard Documentation Requirements for All Claims Submitted to DME MACs.⁵

These updates effect coverage and access to the Medicare Surgical Dressing Benefit. The totality of these updates increases the burden on practitioners ordering/prescribing surgical dressings (wound care supplies) as part of a patient's at home treatment plan.

To assist our practitioners with ordering surgical dressings and establishing the "reasonable and necessary" coverage elements within these policies, we have highlighted the areas which **MUST** be in your patient's medical record. We have also provided an **example** below of how simplistically these elements can be established within your medical record.

- The type of qualifying wound (e.g. a surgically created wound and/or a debrided wound regardless of debridement technique),
- Information regarding the number of qualifying wounds being treated with a dressing,
- Whether the dressing is being used as a primary or secondary dressing,
- The size of the dressing (if applicable),
- The number/amount to be used at one time,
- The frequency of dressing change,
- The duration of need,
- Wound(s) location,
- Wound size (length x width) and depth,
- Amount of drainage, and
- Wound thickness (e.g., full or partial) or equivalent (e.g. staging or grading)

EXAMPLE: Patient John Doe presents today with a 1x1x1cm, grade 3, moderately draining diabetic foot ulcer (wound 2) on distal right foot in need of debridement. Surgical debridement was performed today on wound 2 resulting in post wound debridement measurements of 1.5x1.5x1.5cm. Patient's wound will be prescribed 2x2in collagen (primary) and 3x3in foam (secondary) to be used once every three (3) days for a month. Secured by 1" cloth tape.

NOTE: Should your medical record not account for these areas we strongly encourage you request within your facility/health system an update to your medical record forms/templates to accommodate these vital areas.

¹ Medicare Benefit Policy Manual, Chapter 15, Section 100.

² Medicare Administrative Contractors

³<https://med.noridianmedicare.com/documents/2230703/7218263/Surgical+Dressings+LCD+and+PA>

⁴Same

⁵<https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/details/article-details.aspx?articleid=55426>

