

Program Memorandum Intermediaries/Carriers

Department of Health and
Human Services (DHHS)
HEALTH CARE FINANCING
ADMINISTRATION (HCFA)

Transmittal AB-01-71

Date: MAY 1, 2001

CHANGE REQUEST 1677

SUBJECT: Billing for Audiologic Function Tests For Beneficiaries That Are Patients of a Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF)

This Program Memorandum (PM) provides new billing requirements for audiologic function tests.

Some previous Medicare PMs inadvertently included audiologic function testing with speech therapy services which are subject to SNF Part B consolidated billing requirements that must be billed by the SNF when furnished to beneficiaries in Part B SNF stays. However, audiologic function tests furnished to Part B beneficiaries are separately payable under the Physician Fee Schedule. Other billing requirements for services payable under this fee schedule are included in PMs A-00-88 and B-00-67.

Audiologic function tests will generally be billed to the carrier by the provider of service. For tests that include both a professional component and technical component, the SNF may elect to bill the technical component to the intermediary, but is not required to bill the service. The audiologic function test codes are listed below. All codes listed below have a technical component. Only the two codes identified with an asterisk beside them have a professional component.

Audiologic Function Tests

92552	92553	92555	92556	92557	92561
92562	92563	92564	92565	92567	92568
92569	92571	92572	92573	92575	92576
92577	92579	92582	92583	92584	92587*
92588*	92589	92596	V5299		

Payment to SNFs for audiologic function tests are bundled into the PPS payment amount for beneficiaries in a covered SNF Part A stay, whether provided directly by the SNF or under arrangements by an independent provider based on a contract with the SNF. Independent audiologists may bill the carrier directly for services rendered to beneficiaries not in a SNF Part A covered stay. Payment is to be made based on the Physician Fee Schedule, whether by the carrier or the intermediary. For beneficiaries not in a covered Part A SNF stay, who are sometimes referred to as beneficiaries in a Part B SNF stay, audiologic function tests are payable under Part B when billed by the SNF as type of bill 22x, or when billed directly to the carrier by the provider of the service.

Intermediaries should continue using their current payment methodology until July 1, 2001.

Since audiologic function tests are **not** bundled with speech therapy services, make payment to the provider of service or to the SNF where the services are provided under arrangements with the SNF.

Intermediaries are to inform SNFs of these clarifications with their next regular provider bulletin. Similarly, carriers are to inform audiologists of this clarification with their next provider bulletin. This clarification must be added to your website for providers' use, and should be incorporated into each intermediary's/carrier's provider training material.

The *effective date* of this PM is for services rendered on and after April 1, 2001. Do not search for claims inappropriately denied, but make payment on those brought to your attention.

The *implementation date* of this PM is July 1, 2001, for intermediary payment on the fee schedule, and 30days after receipt for all other instructions.

These instructions should be implemented within your current budget.

This PM may be discarded after April 1, 2002.

Contractors should contact their regional offices with any questions.