

Emergency Department Coding Policy Update

UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of Rhode Island – Effective Nov. 1, 2019

To help reinforce accurate coding practices, we're updating our Emergency Department Facility Evaluation and Management (E/M) Coding Reimbursement, starting Nov. 1, 2019. This policy is based on Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) E/M coding principles that require hospital E/M codes to match CPT® code descriptions and reasonably relate to hospital resource use.

How the New Policy Works

UnitedHealthcare Community Plan in Rhode Island will use the Optum Emergency Department Claim (EDC) Analyzer tool, which looks at the patient's presenting problem, diagnostic services performed and patient comorbidities to determine accurate coding. We'll focus on facility emergency department (ED) claims submitted with these E/M codes:

- Level 4 (99284, G0383)
- Level 5 (99285, G0384)

When claims submitted for ED E/M services don't align with the EDC Analyzer tool, facilities may receive an adjustment for the level 4 or 5 E/M codes submitted to reflect a more appropriate level.

If you receive an adjustment, and you believe a higher level E/M code is justified, you'll have the option of submitting a reconsideration or appeal request, according to the terms of your contract and/or the UnitedHealthcare Administrative Guide. Please visit [UHCprovider.com/guides](https://www.uhcprovider.com/guides) > Community Plan Care Provider Manuals for Medicaid Plans by State > Rhode Island > View the UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of Rhode Island Care Provider Manual.

Policy Exclusions

This policy will apply to both participating and non-participating facilities that submit ED claims with level 4 and 5 E/M codes for our members. However, not every outpatient facility claim will be included in this policy. Some claims will be excluded if they involve:

- Admissions from the emergency department.
- Critical care patients.
- Patients younger than age 2.
- Claims with diagnosis codes that usually require significant nursing time and other extensive resource usage (e.g., alcohol abuse, alcohol dependence, opioid dependence, schizophrenia, child abuse, sexual abuse and bipolar disorder).
- Patients who have expired in the emergency department.
- Claims from facilities billing level 4 and 5 E/M code that don't disparately deviate from the EDC Analyzer tool.

You can learn more about this policy at [UHCprovider.com/policies](https://www.uhcprovider.com/policies) > Community Plan Policies > Reimbursement Policies for Community Plan.

Note Regarding Reimbursement Policies

As with all UnitedHealthcare Community Plan policies, other factors affecting reimbursement may supplement, modify or in some cases supersede this policy. These factors include but are not limited to federal and/or state regulatory requirements, physician or other provider contracts, and/or the member's benefit coverage documents. Unless otherwise noted as follows, these reimbursement policies apply to services reported using the UB04 or its electronic equivalent, or its successor form.

UnitedHealthcare Community Plan reimbursement policies do not address all issues related to reimbursement for services rendered to our members, such as the member's benefit plan documents; our medical policies; and the UnitedHealthcare Community Plan Physician, Health Care Professional, Facility and Ancillary Provider Administrative Guide. Meeting the terms of a particular reimbursement policy is not a guarantee of payment. Likewise, retirement of a reimbursement policy affects only those system edits associated with the specific policy being retired. Retirement of a reimbursement policy is not a guarantee of payment. Other applicable reimbursement and medical policies and claims edits will continue to apply.

If there's an inconsistency or conflict between the information in this Provider Notification and the posted policy, the provisions of the posted reimbursement policy prevail. If you have any questions, please contact your Health Plan Representative or call the number on your Provider Remittance Advice/Explanation of Benefits.

We're Here to Help

If you have questions about this policy, please call Provider Services at the number listed on the back of the member's ID card. Thank you.

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