As members of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), you have been receiving alerts about the 2013-2014 increase in Medicaid payment rates for primary care and immunization services that are part of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). This message is designed to provide additional information about which physicians are eligible for the payment increase.

Under the ACA, primary care physicians with specialty designations of pediatric medicine, family medicine, and/or general internal medicine will receive increased Medicaid payment for certain Evaluation and Management (E/M) and vaccine administration codes for calendar years 2013-2014.

To be eligible, a physician must:

- Self-attest to practicing in one of the designated specialties (pediatrics, family medicine, internal medicine).
- The physician can support their self-attestation either by having a primary specialty designation of pediatric medicine, family medicine, and/or general internal medicine, or a subspecialty designation boarded by one of these specialties, or by attesting that 60% of Medicaid billed charges are for the services covered by the rule.
- Subspecialists boarded in the specialties of pediatrics, internal medicine, and/or family medicine recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), American Board of Physician Specialties (ABPS), or the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) are also eligible.

The Academy recommends that pediatric surgical subspecialists carefully consider the following when determining whether to sign up for this increase:

- A CMS Q&A document notes that, according to the Final Rule, there may be physicians with Board certification in a specialty not recognized for higher payment who actually practice in the community as pediatricians, family practitioners, or internists.
- These physicians would have to qualify for higher payments based on a 60% E/M codes 99201 through 99499 and vaccine administration codes 90460, 90461, 90471, 90472, 90473, 90474 claims history.
- Therefore, pediatric surgical specialists should not fill out a state self-attestation form to sign up for the Medicaid payment rate increase unless practicing in community as a primary care physician.

However, because states have some flexibility in the implementation of the Medicaid payment increase, AAP members are urged to review their state’s self-attestation forms or contact their state Medicaid offices for additional clarification.

As part of an ongoing advocacy effort, the Academy has urged CMS to include all pediatric medical and surgical subspecialties in the payment increase and to apply the increase to all health services provided by pediatricians, pediatric subspecialists, and surgical specialists. The Academy also sought clarification regarding the 60% threshold to allow non-American Board of Pediatrics (ABP) boarded pediatric subspecialists and surgical specialists to qualify.

Subsequent guidance from CMS indicated that the payment increase applies only to physicians who practice primary care in their community. The Final Rule confirms that pediatric subspecialists can qualify by self-attesting that they are either board certified by the American Board of Pediatrics or that at least 60% of all the Medicaid services they bill are E/M codes 99201 through 99499 and vaccine administration codes 90460, 90461, 90471, 90472, 90473, 90474.

A tip sheet on “FAQs on the Medicaid Payment Increase for Primary Care and Immunization Administration Services” includes a list of qualifying board certified pediatric subspecialties.

AAP members who have questions about the payment increase can contact the AAP Division of State Government Affairs at 800-433-9016, extension 7799, or stgov@aap.org or the AAP Department of Federal Affairs at 202-347-8600 or kids1st@aap.org.

Resources

For updated information and resources on the rule, including the Academy’s comments to CMS, fact sheets, and detailed guidance for chapters, visit www.aap.org/MedicaidPaymentIncrease.

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Q&A documents provide additional guidance on the Medicaid payment increase: www.medicaid.gov/AffordableCareAct/Provisions/Provider-Payments.html.