



JENNIFER KENT
DIRECTOR

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
Department of Health Care Services



GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

DATE: June 14, 2019

ALL PLAN LETTER 19-007

TO: ALL MEDI-CAL MANAGED CARE HEALTH PLANS¹

SUBJECT: NON-CONTRACT GROUND EMERGENCY MEDICAL TRANSPORT
PAYMENT OBLIGATIONS FOR STATE FISCAL YEAR 2018-19

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this All Plan Letter (APL) is to provide Medi-Cal managed care health plans (MCPs) with information regarding increased reimbursement for Fee-For-Service (FFS) ground emergency medical transport (GEMT) for Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) codes A0429, A0427, and A0433. The increased FFS reimbursement will affect MCP reimbursement of out-of-network GEMT services as required by section 1396u-2(b)(2)(D) of Title 42 of the United States Code (USC), commonly referred to as “Rogers Rates.”

BACKGROUND:

Pursuant to the Legislature’s addition of Article 3.91 (Medi-Cal Emergency Medical Transportation Reimbursement Act) to the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) in 2017, DHCS established the GEMT Quality Assurance Fee (QAF) program. On February 7, 2019, DHCS obtained federal approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for California State Plan Amendment (SPA) 18-004, with an effective date of July 1, 2018. SPA 18-004 implements a one-year QAF program and reimbursement add-on for GEMT provided by emergency medical transportation providers effective for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2018-19 from July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2019.

POLICY:

In accordance with 42 USC Section 1396u-2(b)(2)(D), Title 42 of the Code of Federal Regulations part 438.114(c), and WIC Sections 14129-14129.7, MCPs must provide increased reimbursement rates for specified GEMT services to non-contracted GEMT providers.

Under WIC Section 14129(g), emergency medical transport is defined as the act of transporting an individual from any point of origin to the nearest medical facility capable of meeting the emergency medical needs of the patient by an ambulance licensed, operated, and equipped, in accordance with applicable state or local statutes,

¹ This APL does not apply to Prepaid Ambulatory Health Plans.

ordinances, or regulations, excluding transportation by an air ambulance provider, that are billed with CPT codes A0429 (BLS Emergency), A0427 (ALS Emergency), and A0433 (ALS2), excluding any transports billed when, following evaluation of a patient, a transport is not provided.

For each qualifying emergency ambulance transport billed with the specified CPT codes, the total FFS reimbursement will be \$339.00 for SFY 2018-2019. Accordingly, MCPs reimbursing non-contracted GEMT providers for those services must pay a "Rogers Rate" for a total reimbursement rate of \$339.00 for each qualifying emergency ambulance transport provided during SFY 2018-19 and billed with the specified CPT codes.

At this time, the total reimbursement rate of \$339.00 for each qualifying emergency ambulance transport billed with the specified CPT codes is time-limited, and is only in effect for SFY 2018-19 dates of service from July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2019. Increased reimbursement for the specified GEMT services may be extended into future fiscal years, and may include additional GEMT codes. If the reimbursement increase is extended, and/or includes additional GEMT codes, DHCS will provide MCPs with further guidance after necessary federal approval is obtained.

Timing of Payment and Claim Submission

The projected value of this payment obligation will be accounted for in the MCPs' actuarially certified risk-based capitation rates. Within 90 calendar days from the date DHCS issues the capitation payments to MCPs for GEMT payment obligations specified in this APL, MCPs must pay, as required by this APL, for all clean claims or accepted encounters with the dates of service between July 1, 2018, and the date the MCP receives such capitation payment from DHCS.

Once DHCS begins issuing the capitation payments to the MCPs for the GEMT payment obligations specified in this APL, MCPs must pay as required by this APL within 90 calendar days of receiving a qualifying clean claim or an accepted encounter.

MCPs are required to make timely payments in accordance with this APL for clean claims or accepted encounters for qualifying transports submitted to the MCPs within one year after the date of service. MCPs are not required to pay the GEMT payment obligation specified in this APL for claims or encounters submitted more than one year after the date of service unless the non-contracted GEMT provider can show good cause.

These submission and payment timing requirements may be waived only if agreed to in writing between the MCPs, the MCPs' delegated entities, or subcontractors, and the rendering GEMT provider.

Impacts Related to Medicare

For dual eligible beneficiaries with Medicare Part B coverage, the increased Medi-Cal reimbursement level may result in a crossover payment obligation on the MCP, because the new Medi-Cal reimbursement amount may exceed 80 percent of the Medicare fee schedule. Based on current Medicare reimbursement rates, the only CPT code where this scenario may occur in certain geographic areas is A0429. MCPs are responsible for identifying and satisfying any Medicare crossover payment obligations that result from the increase in GEMT reimbursement obligations described in this APL.

In instances where a member is found to have other health coverage sources, MCPs must cost avoid or make a post-payment recovery in accordance with the "Cost Avoidance and Post-Payment Recovery of Other Health Coverage Sources" provision of Attachment 2 to Exhibit E of the MCP Contract.

Other Obligations

MCPs are responsible for ensuring qualifying transports reported using the specified CPT codes are appropriate for the services being provided and are reported to DHCS in encounter data pursuant to APL 14-019.

MCPs are responsible for ensuring that their delegated entities and subcontractors comply with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, contract requirements, and other DHCS guidance, including APLs, policy letters, and duals plan letters. MCPs must communicate these requirements to all delegated entities and subcontractors.

Pursuant to the MCP Contract, MCPs must have a formal procedure to accept, acknowledge, and resolve provider grievances related to the processing or non-payment related to this APL. In addition, MCPs must identify a designated point of contact for provider questions and technical assistance.

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If you have any questions regarding the requirements of this APL, please contact your Managed Care Operations Division contract manager.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by Sarah Brooks

Sarah Brooks, Deputy Director
Health Care Delivery Systems