



Credentialing By Proxy

Rational

The Centers for Medicaid/Medicare Services requires that each hospital have a credentialing and privileging process for all physicians and practitioners providing services to its patients. CMS requirements did not take into account those practitioners providing only telemedicine services to patients. Consequently, hospitals applied the credentialing and privileging requirements as if all practitioners were onsite. The traditional approach to credentialing failed to embrace new methods and technologies for service delivery that may improve patient access to high quality care. CMS's final rule permits hospitals and CAHs to implement a new credentialing and privileging process for physicians and practitioners providing telemedicine services. The removal of unnecessary barriers to the use of telemedicine may enable patients to receive medically necessary interventions in a timelier manner. It may enhance patient follow-up in the management of chronic disease conditions. (For more information, visit CMS-3227-F, 5/5/11).

Process

Hospitals choosing to use this new option for privileging must provide for the following:

1. The distant-site hospital is a Medicare-participating hospital.
2. The distant-site practitioner is privileged at the distant-site hospital.
3. The distant-site hospital provides a current list of the practitioner's privileges.
4. The distant-site practitioner holds a license issued or recognized by the state in which the originating-site hospital is located.
5. The originating-site hospital has an internal review of the distant-site practitioner's performance and provides this information to the distant-site hospital.
6. Information sent from the originating-site to the distant site must include all adverse events and complaints from telemedicine services provided by the distant-site practitioner to the originating-site hospital's patients.

Resources

For more detailed information, sites are encouraged to explore the following resources:

- www.ctel.org
- <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2011-05-05/pdf/2011-10875.pdf>