

# MEDICARE ANNUAL WELLNESS VISITS

## THIS MODULE COVERS

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## 1 MEDICARE AWP DEFINITION

The Medicare Annual Wellness Visit (AWV) is a preventive visit covered by Medicare at no cost to patients. Medicare AWP are a great way to connect with your patients, focus on issues that may be overlooked in routine physical exams and develop a long-term preventive care plan.

## 2 MEDICARE AWP BENEFITS FOR PATIENTS

- Medicare AWP help engage with patients, which leads to better patient experience that can drive higher patient satisfaction
- Medicare AWP allow more time for patients to discuss issues that may not come up during a typical problem visit
- Medicare AWP are a great time for patients to address advanced-care planning

## 3 MEDICARE AWP BENEFITS FOR PRACTICES

- Medicare AWP help engage with patients. Engaged patients are more likely to stay within your practice.
- During a Medicare AWP, you often plan billable follow-up visits
- During a Medicare AWP, you can document a patient's health story in-depth, ensuring an accurate problem list for each patient.
- Medicare AWP can help your practice meet quality measures for health insurance contracts

## 4 TYPES OF MEDICARE AWP AND ELIGIBILITY

- **Welcome to Medicare Visit** (G0402) – (Initial Preventive Physical Examination, or IPPE)
  - Medicare pays for one per lifetime
  - Must be done in the first 12 months of Part B coverage
- **Initial Medicare Annual Wellness Visit** (G0438)
  - Applies the first time a beneficiary receives a Medicare AWP
  - Patient is eligible after the first 12 months of Part B coverage
  - Patient hasn't completed a Welcome to Medicare Visit in the past 12 months
- **Subsequent Medicare Annual Wellness Visit** (G0439)
  - Applies to all Medicare AWP after a beneficiary's initial Medicare AWP
  - No Medicare AWP within the past year

## 5 MEDICARE AWP EXAMPLES

Three Medicare members, Martha, Joe and Mary want to schedule a preventive visit with you.

- **Martha** – Martha has had Medicare for five months
  - According to Medicare criteria Martha is eligible for a Welcome to Medicare Visit because she enrolled in Medicare less than 12 months ago.
- **Joe** – Joe has had Medicare for 18 months
  - According to Medicare criteria, Joe is eligible for an Initial Medicare AWP because he's had Medicare for longer than 12 months and has never had a Medicare AWP.
- **Mary** – Mary is an experienced member of Medicare for three years, who had an initial Medicare AWP 13 months ago
  - According to Medicare criteria, Mary is eligible for a Subsequent Medicare AWP because she's had Medicare longer than 12 months and it's been at least 12 months since her initial Medicare AWP.

## 6 MEDICARE AWV COMPARISONS

Required Components	Welcome to Medicare Visit	Initial Medicare AWV	Subsequent Medicare AWV
Establish/update Health Risk Assessment		X	X
Document height, weight, BMI and blood pressure	X	X	X
Document current medications and supplements, including review of opioid use: <i>Assess the benefit for other non-opioid pain therapies</i>	X	X	X
Establish/update a list of current providers		X	X
Obtain and document medical, surgical and family history	X	X	X
Establish/update a list of the patient's risk factors, conditions and treatment options		X	X
Depression screening	X	X	
Assess cognitive function		X	X
Visual acuity screening	X		
Review patient's functional ability and level of safety	X	X	X
Advance Care Planning (with patient consent)	X	X	X
Provide education, counseling and referrals based on the components of the visit	X	X	X
Provide a written preventive screening schedule • May include a one-time EKG/ECG. Screen during a Welcome to Medicare Visit ONLY	X	X	X

## 7 PHYSICAL EXAM/MEDICARE AWV COMPARE AND CONTRAST

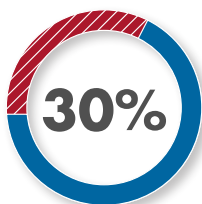
A physical exam is much more extensive than an Annual Wellness Visit. Generally speaking, physicals consist of detailed services such as a head-to-toe exam and lab work.

Annual Wellness Visits are primarily focused on a conversation with your patient about their current health risks and creating a comprehensive plan for necessary preventive services for the next five to 10 years, along with any recommendations for lifestyle intervention. Those interventions may include diet or physical activity, tobacco-use cessation or fall prevention.

## 8 HELPFUL TIPS TO COMPLETING A MEDICARE AWV

- To help manage time spent with patients, Medicare allows for the following health-care providers to complete Medicare AWVs:
  - Physician
  - Nurse Practitioner
  - Physician Assistant
  - Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Medicare also allows the following to complete Medicare AWVs with a physician sign-off:
  - Registered Nurses
  - Registered Dietitians
  - Health Educators
  - Other licensed practitioners
- Nurses can research care gaps during the visit
- Office staff can mail out a Health Risk Assessment to complete ahead of time, which can save up to 20-minutes in your office

## 9 KEY STATISTICS



According to Bellin Health Partners ACO, patients that received a Medicare AWV had **30% fewer service gaps** and were **60% more likely** to have an advance directive on file than patients that did not receive a Medicare AWV.



Bellin Health Partners ACO also found that patients who received a Medicare AWV had **substantially fewer emergency** room visits and lower overall health costs.



The Medicare AWV is reimbursed at around **\$110**, while reimbursement for an established office visit is about **\$80**.