

# Medicare Annual Wellness Visits

## Education Module Quick Reference Overview

### 1 MEDICARE AWV OVERVIEW

The Medicare Annual Wellness Visit (AWV) is an annual appointment between a Medicare beneficiary and a provider to create or update a long-term preventive care plan. This visit is provided at no cost to patients and provides you the opportunity to spend extra time with your patients and focus on preventive care.

### 2 THREE TYPES OF PREVENTIVE VISITS

#### a. Welcome to Medicare/IPPE (Code G0402)

- i. Medicare covers one in a beneficiary's lifetime
- ii. Must be completed in the first 12 months of Part B coverage
- iii. Includes a visual acuity screening and allows for a one-time electrocardiogram screen

#### b. Initial Medicare Annual Wellness Visit (Code G0438)

- i. Eligible if a beneficiary has not received a Welcome to Medicare visit in the past 12 months
- ii. Beneficiary has had Medicare Part B for more than a year

#### c. Subsequent Medicare Annual Wellness Visit (Code G0439)

- i. Applies once a calendar year after a beneficiary's initial Medicare AWV
- ii. No Medicare AWV within the past year

### 3 MEDICARE AWV EXAMPLE

Three Medicare members want to schedule a preventive visit with you.

James



**5 Months**

- o Enrolled in Medicare less than 12 months ago
- x Has not had a Medicare AWV yet

**Welcome to Medicare Visit/IPPE**

Anthony



**18 Months**

- o Has had Medicare for longer than 12 months
- x Has never had a Medicare AWV

**Initial Medicare AWV**

Mary



**3 Years**

- o Has had Medicare longer than 12 months
- x More than 11 months since Initial AWV

**Subsequent Medicare AWV**

### 4 APPOINTMENT STRUCTURE

Medicare Annual Wellness Visits are not head-to-toe physicals. Some providers find that distributing and having patients complete the HRA in advance can improve the workflow and allow time for discussion.

- Can take up to 40 minutes to complete and include other members of staff
- Review and update the patient's family and medical history
- Document the patient's vital signs and review their health risk assessment for:
  - o Depression and other mood disorders
  - o Ability to perform daily tasks such as cooking and showering
  - o Fall risk
  - o Home safety
  - o Cognitive status and hearing levels

#### Cognitive Assessment

- Include notations of the patient's general appearance, speech, memory and motor skills
- Two simple, cost-free screening options for hearing are:
  - o Rubbing your fingers together six inches behind the patient, or
  - o Conducting a whisper test at a distance of two feet
- Should include a visual acuity test where you ask patients to determine the smallest letters they can read on a standardized chart, or a card held at a distance

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## Takeaway Resource

### 5 ADDRESSING CARE GAPS

The AWW is an ideal time to review open care gaps for your patients and ensure that all vaccinations, screenings and other preventive services are current. This includes common vaccinations, advance care planning and comprehensive preventive plans.

### 6 PATIENT AND PROVIDER BENEFITS

- Quality Outcomes
  - Health and wellness goals
  - Questions and concerns
- Care Management and Risk Capture
  - Assess and address issues early before developing into something urgent
  - Ideal time to review a patient's care gaps and ensure that all preventive exams and vaccinations are complete
  - Capture and recapture patient's health risk
- Cost Savings Initiatives
  - AWWs led to a 5.7% reduction in total health-care costs the 11 months following the AWW
- Patient and Provider Relationship
  - Patients can address questions or concerns not covered in other appointments

### 7 PATIENT ENGAGEMENT

Engaging your patient can improve outcomes. Some clinics have found it beneficial to mail letters to patients to notify them when they are due for a visit. Another method is to introduce the AWW during a one-on-one with patient during another visit. You can also have a member of your care team call the patient so they can get questions answered over the phone.

### 8 BILLING AND CODING

Additional services can be billed when appropriate. This includes:

- Extended depression screening
- Advance care planning
- Vaccinations
- Electrocardiogram (Only free with a Welcome to Medicare Visit/IPPE)

### KEY STATISTICS



**70%**

According to the American Journal of Managed Care, AWWs lead to 70 percentage points higher screenings rates for fall risk and depression; and increased rates for blood pressure control, A1c control, breast cancer screening, colorectal cancer screening and tobacco use screening and cessation counseling.



**30%**

Research from Bellin Health Partners ACO found that patients who received an AWW had 30% fewer care gaps.



**60%**

Beneficiaries receiving an AWW were 60% more likely to have an advance directive on file than those who did not complete an AWW, according to Bellin Health Partners ACO.