

Alert for Ophthalmologists and Optometrists

Medicare Low Vision Rehabilitation Demonstration

CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES

Medicare is conducting a demonstration project that will expand benefits for your patients with moderate to severe visual impairments.

Through this demonstration, Medicare will assess the impact of providing reimbursement for vision rehabilitation services in appropriate settings, **including in the patient's home**, by qualified vision rehabilitation professionals under **general supervision** by the physician.

Vision rehabilitation can restore functional abilities, and enhance the safety and independence, of individuals with vision impairments. These services can train the individual in safe and independent travel in and outside the home; medication management; self-care; community integration; and the use of low vision devices.

Demonstration Locations

The Low Vision Rehabilitation Demonstration will be conducted in these selected areas of the country:

- Atlanta, Georgia
- Kansas
- New Hampshire
- New York City (all five boroughs)
- North Carolina
- Washington State

Medicare is encouraging ophthalmologists and optometrists in the designated demonstration areas to participate. *Your participation is voluntary, but essential* if Medicare is to be able to fully assess the impact of expanded coverage.

However, should you choose *not* to participate in the demonstration, you may continue to submit

claims for vision rehabilitation services as before, according to your carrier's local coverage rules.

Who Can Deliver the Rehabilitation Services

If you choose to participate, you will be able to utilize the full range of qualified rehabilitation professionals in your practice area. The following types of vision rehabilitation professionals will be able to provide rehabilitation services:

- Qualified Occupational Therapists
- Certified Low Vision Therapists*
- Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists*
- Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapists*

*Certified by the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP)

Under this demonstration, you will be able to prescribe for your patients *up to a total of 9* hours of rehabilitation services over a consecutive 90-day period. Services can be provided in the patient's home environment without the need for you to be on the premises or provide direct supervision and are not subject to Medicare therapy caps.

Patient Eligibility

To be eligible to participate,

- Your practice and the patient's home address must *both* be in a designated demonstration area. If you practice in Atlanta or New York City, consult the CMS Web site to find zip codes that are eligible.
- Your patient must:
 - ♦ be enrolled in Medicare Part B;
 - ♦ *not* be enrolled in a Medicare Advantage Plan;

- ♦ have a visual impairment that cannot be corrected through conventional means; and
- ♦ be able to derive benefit from the rehabilitation.

How to Participate

- You first need to identify a patient who is eligible for this coverage and in need of rehabilitation services.
- Second, you must prepare a plan of care that identifies the type of rehabilitation needed and the location(s) where the rehabilitation is to be provided.
- Third, you must decide which vision rehabilitation professional(s) should provide the services.

Making the Referral

You may refer your patient to an occupational therapist or certified low vision rehabilitation professional to carry out the plan of care. If you refer to an occupational therapist in private practice (OTPP), the therapist may submit the claim under their own Medicare provider number.

You may also refer to a Medicare qualified rehabilitation facility. In this case you may still submit the claim or assign the claim to the facility for billing.

For help locating a provider, visit the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP) and American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) Web sites at www.acvrep.org and www.aota.org.

In all cases, demonstration claims must identify the provider of the rehabilitation by using the following demonstration billing codes:

- G 9041 Occupational Therapist
- G 9042 Orientation and Mobility Specialist
- G 9043 Low Vision Therapist
- G 9044 Vision Rehabilitation Therapist (*also called Rehabilitation Teacher*)

For More Information

Medicare Low Vision Rehabilitation Demonstration

- For more details about the demonstration, or to look up Atlanta and New York City zip codes that are eligible, see CMS' Low Vision Rehabilitation Demonstration Web page at www.cms.hhs.gov/DemoProjectsEvalRpts/MD/list.asp (From this page, enter "vision" into the keyword search box, and then click "refresh list" button. Scroll down page to "Medicare Low Vision Rehabilitation Demonstration".)
- If you have any questions about this demonstration, please contact the Low Vision Rehabilitation Demonstration Project Officer at visiondemo@cms.hhs.gov

Standards for Certification

- Learn about the various requirements for certification in *Orientation & Mobility, Low Vision Therapy, and Vision Rehabilitation Therapy*. Visit the ACVREP Web site at acvrep.org and click on standards.

What You Need to Know About Billing

- Please read "New Requirements for Low Vision Rehabilitation Demonstration Billing" for complete details www.cms.hhs.gov/MedlearnMattersArticles/downloads/MM3816.pdf. Or, contact your local Medicare carrier.

