



FLORIDA SOCIETY OF CLINICAL ONCOLOGY FAX BLAST – September 11, 2008
FLASCO WEBSITE: www.flasco.org

MESSAGE FROM FLASCO PRESIDENT: Robert Cassell, MD

I want to thank Dr. Rogerio Lilenbaum, Chairman of the FLASCO Program Committee, and the other members for putting together an outstanding program for our November 7 & 8, 2008, meeting at the Tampa Airport Marriott Hotel.

REMINDER: The deadline for hotel reservations and registration is **October 1**. If you have not registered – please do so immediately.

CLINICAL PRACTICE COMMITTEE: Tom Gaddis, MD, Chairman

Blue Cross/ Blue Shield Of Florida Payment Problem For Surgical And Procedure Based PAs

This problem pertains to all PA's in the state that may bill BCBSFL for procedure based claims - surgical assisting, office surgery, office procedures, hospital procedures, etc. While BCBSFL does not assign provider numbers to individual PA's, they will assign a group provider number to groups of PA's who provide surgical assisting. Additionally, under Florida state law, they (along with all state licensed carriers) must reimburse PA's who assist in surgery on all covered procedures that would have reimbursed if a physician had assisted, regardless of a provider number and via a manual claim. However, this problem isn't based on whether or not you have a provider number - it's based on being a PA.

The problem - about 2 years ago, BCBSFL implemented a new computer system which erroneously assigned an identifying code number to PA's that should have been assigned to another type of provider, and these particular providers were not eligible for reimbursement. They were made aware of this error, and in their attempts to correct this, we were assigned to yet another erroneous provider identifying code number. The result is denied payments because of a "non-covered provider" status. We have been in contact with various BCBSFL representatives over the past 18 months, with no success up to this point. While some claims have in fact paid, most are denied for the above reason. This problem does not affect PA's who are billing through their physician's provider number, but only those PA's who submitting claims for separately identifiable services are.

If you or your office is billing BCBSFL for procedures as described above, please check with your billing office and see if you have been receiving denials on EOB's for your services because of a "non-covered provider" status, or something similar. If this is indeed occurring, please send me an email with an approximate number of denials and an estimated payment total. If you are being reimbursed without difficulty, please let me know this as well. We are in the process of undertaking several options to correct this growing problem, and your input would be extremely helpful.

FCSO UPDATES:

Payment for Non-ESRD ESA Services Billed Under HCPCS Codes J0881/J0885

First Coast Service Options Inc. (FCSO) recently identified an issue that occurred with the implementation of the April 2008 release. It was discovered that claims meeting the criteria below were denied with reason code 55503 or 56000 in error based on the local coverage determination (LCD) for erythropoiesis stimulating agents (ESAs) – LCD ID L895:

- Claims submitted on or after April 7, 2008
- Dates of service on or after April 7, 2008
- HCPCS codes J0881 or J0885
- Submitted with a payable dual diagnosis combination.

This problem was identified, and corrected, on July 25, 2008, and it does not impact claims submitted on or after July 25, 2008

Action by providers is voluntary

Providers may submit adjustments on claims for non-end stage renal disease (ESRD) ESA services that denied in error with reason code 55503 or 56000 based on the above criteria. However, FCSO will adjust the impacted claims once the data becomes available.

CMS UPDATES:

Holding of Certain Screening Pap Smear Claims billed by OPSS Providers

Due to systems issues related to an incorrect deductible and coinsurance assignment of Screening Pap Smears claims containing Healthcare Common Procedure Coding (HCPCS) code Q0091, (Screening Papanicolaou (Pap) smear, obtaining, preparing and conveyance of cervical or vaginal smear to laboratory) on OPSS claims, effective immediately, CMS will be instructing their contractors to hold all claims containing HCPCS code Q0091 submitted by OPSS facilities. These claims will be held by contractors until the successful implementation of the Outpatient Code Editor (OCE), scheduled for January 5, 2009. In the interim, OPSS facilities may choose not to submit HCPCS code Q0091 until the successful implementation of the OCE, in order to avoid a delay in reimbursement for other services submitted on the claim. Interest will be paid on clean claims held longer than 30 days after the date of receipt.

2009 Competitive Acquisition Program (CAP) Postponement Announcement

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) today announced the postponement of the 2009 Medicare Part B Competitive Acquisition Program (CAP). The program will continue through December 31, 2008.

Earlier this year, CMS accepted bids for vendor contracts for the 2009-11 CAP. While CMS received several qualified bids, contractual issues with the successful bidders resulted in CMS postponing the 2009 program. As a result, CAP physician election for participation in the CAP in 2009 will not be held, and CAP drugs will not be available from an approved CAP vendor for dates of service after December 31, 2008.

Later this fall, CMS will provide additional guidance for participating CAP physicians on how to transition out of the program. This information will be posted on the CMS CAP physician's page at:

http://www.cms.hhs.gov/CompetitiveAcquisforBios/02_infophys.asp

CMS also plans to seek feedback on the CAP from participating physicians, potential vendors, and other interested parties. CMS will assess the information and consider implementing changes to the CAP before proceeding with another bid solicitation. As part of the process, CMS is interested in hearing from the public about a range of issues, including, but not limited to, the categories of drugs provided under the CAP, the distribution of areas that are served by the CAP, and procedural changes that may increase the program's flexibility and appeal to potential vendors and physicians.

Information about how to submit comments will be available at: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/CompetitiveAcquisforBios/>

Update to a Medicare Learning Network Educational Product: CMS Form 1500 Web-Based Training Course

The CMS Form 1500 Web-based Training (WBT) course has been updated (July 2008) and is now available from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Medicare Learning Network. This WBT course provides information that will allow you to file Medicare Part B claims accurately and reduce your chances of receiving unprocessable rejections.

To access this WBT, visit <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/mlngeninfo/>, scroll down to "Related Links Inside CMS" and select "Web-based training Modules", scroll down to "Office Management Information" to select this training.

FDA UPDATES:

FDA requires label change for TNF-blocker drugs

The FDA announced that the manufacturers of four tumour necrosis factor (TNF) blockers will be required to strengthen existing warnings on the drugs' labels about the risk of developing opportunistic fungal infections. The products in question are Johnson & Johnson's Remicade (infliximab), Wyeth's and Amgen's Enbrel (etanercept), Abbott's Humira (adalimumab), and UCB's Cimzia (certolizumab). FDA grants priority review for Novartis' kidney cancer drug

by Bryan DeBusk

FDA has granted priority review for Afinitor (everolimus)

Novartis announced that the FDA has granted priority review for Afinitor (everolimus), the company's experimental drug for advanced kidney cancer. The drugmaker expects a decision from regulators by the end of the year and plans to launch the drug in the US in 2009, if approved. Novartis has also filed marketing authorisations for Afinitor with the EMEA and Swissmedic.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES:

Oncotype DX -New HER2 Score Web Conference – Genomic Health

Gary Palmer, MD, JD, MBA, MPH • Thursday, September 18 • 8 pm EDT

Gary Palmer, MD, JD, MBA, MPH • Friday, October 3 • 12 pm EDT

The following is Pathology focused:

Rick Baehner, MD • Tuesday, September 30 • 1 pm EDT

To register: **Physicians may register by contacting Nikki Detore at 1-866-984-5114 or ndetore@envisioncomm.net**

“Treatment Modalities for Metastatic Androgen-Independent Prostate Cancer: A Multidisciplinary Approach”

Tuesday, September 23rd, 2008 – LIVE Web-cast at two Locations in Florida– 6:00 P.M. at Roy’s Restaurant, 4342 W. Boy Scout Road, Tampa, FL 33607, and 6:00 P.M. at Marriott Fort Lauderdale North 6650 North Andrews Avenue, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309. **Target Audience:** Urologists, Medical Oncologists, ARNP’s, and PA’s. Please register to attend a specific location or attend remotely via our Web Conference at <http://medtrendintl.com/invite/mtt> or 1-888-364-5228

Making Sense Of Medicare Part D

Novartis invites you to participate in a webcast **Tuesday, September 16, 2008 - 12:30-1:20 p.m. EST** - This 50-minute discussion will explore in detail the Medicare Part D and commercial insurance markets, focusing on trends in benefit design, formulary structure, quality programs, and patient access to medications. This program features Joseph Ward, Senior Director, Managed Care Marketing, Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation; Dan Mendelson, President, Avalere Health; and Penny Mills, Vice President, Avalere Health. To participate: register at: <http://www.novartismedia.com/ms/con/reg.php>

Fourth Annual Oncology Congress:

FLASCO is one of the co-sponsors of the Fourth Annual Oncology Congress which will be held September 25-28, 2008, at the Hilton San Francisco. If you are interested in receiving a copy of the Final Program Information please contact the FLASCO Executive Director and she will be glad to send you a copy.

CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP/SPONSORSHIP: (January 1 – December 31, 2008)

FLASCO Members extends a big thanks to all of our 2008 Corporate Members/Sponsors

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FLASCO EVENTS:

November 7-8, 2008 – FLASCO Fall Meeting – Tampa Airport Marriott Hotel

January 17-18, 2009 – Clinical Breakthroughs & Challenges in Hematologic Malignancies – Grand Floridian Resort – Lake Buena Vista

February 6 & 7, 2009 – Highlights of ASH - Miami

February 27 & 28, 2009 – FLASCO Spring Meeting – Marriott Sawgrass – Jacksonville

March 20, 2009 – Statewide PA & NP Conference, Moffitt Cancer Center - Tampa

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Email: Dorothy.Green@cancer.org

OTHER EVENTS:

September 12-13, 2008 - The Palmer House Hilton – Chicago - 2008 ASH State-of-the-Art Symposium (SAS)

September 17-20, 2008 – ACCC 25th National Oncology Economic Conference – San Francisco, California

September 19-20, 2008 - Annual ASCO/ASH/SGO Meeting of the Hematology/Oncology CAC Network

September 25-28, 2008 - Oncology Congress - the Hilton San Francisco

October 19-22, 2008 – MGMA 2008 Annual Conference – San Diego

October 23rd & 24th, 2008 – ASCO State Leadership Conference – Alexandria, VA

December 6-9, 2008 – ASH Annual meeting – San Francisco

February 26-28, 2009 – ASCO - GU Symposium, Orlando World Center Marriott

March 22-24, 2009 - 2009 AOHA Assembly Conference – Los Angeles, California