

# Condition Code Implementation

*Presented by*

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# What We'll Cover Today

- Regulatory Guidance for Condition Codes – David Werfel
- Overview of Training and Documents Provided to Participants – Deb Gault
- Application of Condition Codes on Patient Encounters – Ann Singer
- Questions and Answers



- 12/23/05
- Transmittal 789
- C.R. 4221
- Pub. 100-04, Chapter 15
  - Section 30.3



Condition Codes Are Effective  
on March 27, 2006



# Implementation of Condition Codes Does *NOT* Change Coverage Policies



Condition Codes Apply to  
Both Suppliers AND  
Providers



Only Primary Code Is Needed  
In Most, If Not All Cases



# ICD-9 “Primary” Code

- This is the code that should cover most, of not all, of your claims
  - Intent of Condition Codes was that this one “Primary” Code Would Explain the Need for Ambulance Transport
  - First field on Claim is On-Scene Condition
  - Second Field (when needed) corresponds to Dispatch Condition
  - Both are drawn from “Primary” Code column on Medical Condition List

# ICD-9 “Alternative”



- More Specific
- Requested by the AHA because hospital-based providers often have knowledge that suppliers do not that is more extensive about the patient encounter
- Use of the Primary Code alone will accommodate most, if not all, claims submissions



# Carriers Can Still Have Local Medical Policies



Condition Codes Do  
*NOT* Guarantee  
Coverage  
*OR* Payment at Specific  
Level of Service

# Transportation Indicators

- Ground T.I.
  - C1 – C7
- Air T.I.
  - C1 – C4
  - D1 – D4



# Ground And Air T.I.

- C1 – Inter-Hospital
  - EMTALA
  - Higher Level of Care
- C2 – Inter-Hospital
  - NOT EMTALA
  - Higher Level of Care





# Ground And Air T.I.

- C3 – Response to a Major Incident or Mechanism of Injury
  - Explosion
  - Building Fire
  - Train, Bus, Plane Crash, etc., With Patients Trapped



# Ground And Air T.I.

- C4 – Covered Mileage Beyond Nearest Facility
  - Hospital Diversion
  - Service Not Available At Time of Transport
  - Must Document Reason and Should Indicate Reason on Claim in Comment/Narrative Field



# Ground Only T.I.

- C5 – ALS Condition, No ALS Assessment, No ALS Intervention, BLS Transport
  - Where no ALS is Available
  - BLS Payment

# Ground Only T.I.

- C6 – ALS Assessment Required
  - Claim Requires Two Primary Codes
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Code = On-Scene Condition
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Code = Condition at Dispatch That Requires ALS





# Ground Only T.I.

- C7 – ALS Non-Emergency – I.V. Medications
  - Does Not Apply to Crystalloid I.V. Fluids, e.g. Normal Saline, Lactate Ringers, D5W

# Air Only T.I.

- D1 – Long Distance
- D2 – Traffic
- D3 – Time
- D4 – Origin Not Accessible By Ground



# Q-Codes

- Q-Codes are Not Listed Since They are No Longer Applicable to Medicare



# ALS Assessment



- No Change in Coverage
- Emergency Only
- If, Based Upon Local Medical Protocol Or Dispatch Condition Requires Paramedic Or EMT-I To Assess Condition Of Patient
- Not For All Emergencies

# Suggestions

- Study List Closely
- Split, Reformat, Cross Walk List to Best Suit Your Needs
- Have Your Dispatch, Billing, Crew Supervisors Meet to Discuss Implementation



# Suggestions

- Review Current Paperwork and Documentation
  - Call Intake
  - Trip Reports
  - Billing



# Suggestions

- Meet With Carrier/Intermediary
  - Implementation
  - Problems
  - Questions
  - Possibly Test a Few Claims





# Training Documents

- Training Guide
- Medical Condition Lists
  - Simplified Original List
  - Simplified List in ICD9 Order
  - Simplified List in Medical Category Order
- Dispatch Cross-walk Example
- Condition Code Application Examples

# Training Guide



- Includes:
  - Coverage Review
  - History, Objectives & Rationale for Ambulance Condition Codes
  - How to Apply Ambulance Condition Codes
  - Using the Medical Conditions List and Transport Indicators

# Training Guide



- Coverage Review
  - Vehicle & Crew Requirements
  - Claims submitted must be found reasonable AND necessary to be reimbursed
  - Condition Codes help communicate the medical necessity for ambulance service



# Training Guide

- History, Objectives, Rationale:
  - Goal – To develop a simplified, standard method of communicating medical necessity for ambulance service
  - Rationale – two key decision points that determine level of service
  - Benefits – Consistency, standardization, reduction in adjudication costs for all, simplified list of codes that truly represent our patient encounters and business



# Training Guide

- How to Apply the Codes:
  - Most claims will require only one condition code
    - ALS response to ALS transport
    - BLS response to BLS or ALS transport
  - Two condition codes must be included whenever an ALS ambulance responds to a resulting BLS level transport



# Training Guide

- Placement of Codes
  - Condition Codes have been cross walked to “best fit” ICD9 Code
  - Codes should be placed in fields already provided within electronic claim
  - First code = On-scene condition code
  - Second code = When ALS ambulance responds appropriately but a BLS patient is transported, code that describes condition heard in dispatch that warranted ALS response is placed into second code field on claim (Transport Indicator “C6” is included in comment/narrative field also).
  - Transport Indicators placed in comment/narrative field on submitted claims when required



# Training Guide

- Choosing the Correct Condition Code
  - More than one code may be applicable for a situation, but the code that most closely and accurately describes the patient's condition should be selected and placed on the claim
  - Comment/narrative field can always be used to provide additional information if desired, however codes were designed to minimize the need for this practice and the need to include more than one code to describe the patient encounter (except where previously indicated)



# Training Guide

- Two situations that would always require comment/narrative information:
  - Transport Indicator “C2” – When transporting a patient from one hospital to another for necessary care or services not available at originating facility – should include the type of services required in the comment/narrative field
  - Transport Indicator “C4” – Should provide reason patient was not taken to nearest facility with the transport indicator in the comment/narrative field



# Training Guide

- Using the Medical Condition List:
  - List explanation included
  - How and when to use Transport Indicators on claims
  - Application of the Medical Condition List for Air Ambulance Services
    - Air Ambulance Transport Indicators and use of Medical Condition List



# Medical Condition List

- Lists Provided
  - Original List “Simplified” for practical use by coders
  - List in ICD-9 order
  - List in Medical Category Order



# Dispatch Cross Walk

- Example provided of ONE system that follows their specific protocols that was developed in conjunction with their vendor
  - This example follows the protocols for EMSA in Tulsa and Oklahoma City and cross walks the Medical Priority Dispatch System codes using their medical protocols to the appropriate condition code for use when submitting claims

# Dispatch Cross Walk



- Remember – for MOST of your transports, the dispatch code may not be important, however, if you do not have dispatch information available when you respond an ALS ambulance to a resulting BLS level transport, you will not be able to bill for what may have been a medically appropriate ALS assessment based upon the caller's information
- Dispatch documentation is critical for ALS responses that result in BLS level transports to provide medical reason why an ALS assessment is required



# Dispatch Cross Walk

- Example was provided to show you what you should do in your own operation
- Your medical protocols are critical to validate ALS level response
- Sit down and review your dispatch protocols as they relate to the condition codes and produce a similar tool specific to your own operation



# Critical Documentation

- Dispatch:
  - Appropriate Medical Protocols to support your response decisions
  - Documentation of caller information
  - Appropriate cross walk of dispatch information to condition code submitted on claim
- PBS
  - Patient Care Record
  - Other information supporting information submitted on claim
  - PCS

# Coding Examples

- Previous Examples included in your packet to help you with implementation
- Using Condition Codes is a paradigm shift and huge change in approach





# ALS Dispatch/ ALS On-scene Condition

## Traffic Accident – [page 1]

Dispatch Chief Complaint: 22 y/o male.

29B06 Traffic accident – unknown status

Dispatch Condition Code: 959.8 Major Trauma, ALS

On-scene Condition: Altered Mental Status, r/o concussion

On-scene Condition Code: 869.0  
Suspected internal head, chest or abdominal injuries-closed, ALS



# Billing – Traffic Accident - [page2]

- BLS Service:
  - Condition Code 869.0 – Suspect internal head, chest or abdominal injuries with BLS HCPCS code.
  - Transportation Indicator – C5
- ALS or combined BLS/ALS Service:
  - Condition Code 869.0 – Suspect internal head, chest or abdominal injuries with ALS HCPCS code.
  - Transportation Indicator - None

# ALS Dispatch / ALS On-scene Condition

Fall – [page 1]

Dispatch Chief Complaint: 55 y/o male.

17B01 Fall/Possible Dangerous Area

Dispatch Condition Code: 869.0 Suspect  
internal head, chest or abdominal injuries,  
ALS

On-scene Condition: Assisted living resident  
rolled out of bed lacerating scalp. No loss of  
consciousness; bleeding controlled.

On-scene Condition Code: 869.0 Suspect  
internal head, chest or abdominal injuries,  
ALS





# Billing – Fall - [page 2]

- BLS Service:
  - Condition Code: 869.0 – Suspect internal head, chest or abdominal injuries with BLS HCPCS code.
  - Transportation Indicator – C5
- ALS or Combined BLS/ALS Service:
  - Condition Code: 869.0 – Suspect internal head, chest or abdominal injuries, with ALS HCPCS code.
  - Transportation Indicator - None

# BLS Dispatch / ALS On-scene Condition

## Unknown Problem - [page 1]

Dispatch Chief Complaint: 19 y/o male.

32B03 Unknown problem/unknown status

Dispatch Condition Code: None, BLS

On-scene Condition: EMS called to check the welfare of pt sitting on the ground. States he was assaulted by multiple persons, blood oozing from stab wound to buttock. Laceration to head. Bruises over much of body but no deformities identified.

On-scene Condition Code: 869.1 Suspect internal head, chest or abdominal injuries – open, ALS



# Billing – Unknown Problem

[page 2]



- BLS Service:
  - Condition Code 869.1 Suspect internal head, chest or abdominal injuries with BLS HCPCS code
  - Transportation Indicator – C5
- ALS or combined BLS/ALS Service:
  - Condition Code 869.1 Suspect internal head, chest or abdominal injuries with ALS HCPCS code
  - Transportation Indicator - None

# ALS Dispatch/ BLS On-scene Condition

## Abdominal Pain - [page1]

Dispatch Chief Complaint: 50 y/o male

06D01 Breathing problem/severe respiratory distress

Dispatch Condition Code: 786.05 Difficulty breathing, ALS

On-scene Condition: Pt complains of stomach ache and multiple vague complaints. ALS assessment finds normal breath sounds and VS with abdomen SNT.

On-scene Condition Code: 789.00 Abdominal pain w/o other signs or symptoms, BLS





# Billing - Abdominal Pain - [page 2]

- BLS Service:
  - Condition Code 789.00 Abdominal pain w/o other symptoms with BLS HCPCS code
  - Transportation Indicator – None
- ALS or combined BLS/ALS Service:
  - Condition Code – (1) 789.00 Abdominal pain w/o other symptoms  
(2) 786.05 Difficulty breathing w/ALS HCPCS code
  - Transportation Indicator – C6

# BLS Dispatch/ BLS On-scene Condition

## Allergic Reaction – [page 1]

Dispatch Chief Complaint: 26 y/o male.

02A02 Allergic reaction, spider bite w/ previous reaction

Dispatch Condition Code: 692.9 Allergic reaction w/hives, itching, rash, local swelling, redness, BLS.

On-scene Condition: Localized swelling on upper leg with redness and indentation. Skin taut, patient has significant pain.

On-scene Condition Code: 692.9 Allergic reaction with swelling/redness, BLS.





## Billing – Allergic Reaction – [page 2]

- BLS Service:
  - Condition Code 692.9 – Allergic reaction w/ swelling & redness with BLS HCPCS code.
  - Transportation Indicator – None
- ALS or combined BLS/ALS Service:
  - Condition Code 692.9 – Allergic reaction w/ swelling & redness with BLS HCPCS code.
  - Transportation Indicator – None.

# ALS Dispatch / ALS On-scene Condition

## Overdose - [page 1]

Dispatch Chief Complaint: 40 y/o female

23B01 Overdose w/o priority symptoms

Dispatch Condition Code: 977.9 Poisons

ingested, injected, inhaled, absorbed, ALS

On-scene Condition: Self administered 45

klonopin; depressed over family death; also ingested several alcoholic drinks. Slightly lethargic/slurred speech.

On-scene Condition Code: 977.9 Poisons

ingested, injected, inhaled, absorbed, ALS



# Billing – Overdose - [page 2]



- BLS Service:
  - Condition Code 977.9 Poisons ingested, injected, inhaled, absorbed with BLS HCPCS code.
  - Transportation Indicator – C5
- ALS or combined BLS/ALS Service:
  - Condition Code 977.9 Poisons ingested, injected, inhaled, absorbed with ALS HCPCS code.
  - Transportation Indicator - None

# BLS Dispatch/ ALS On-scene Condition

## Alcoholic DT's - [page 1]

Dispatch Chief Complaint: 55 y/o male

26B01 Sick person, unknown status

Dispatch Condition Code: None, BLS

On-scene Condition: Thought he had a seizure,  
arms and legs shaking uncontrollably.

Nauseated. Hasn't had a drink in two days.

ALS assessment performed.

On-scene Condition Code: 436 Neurologic  
distress....abnormal movements...., ALS



# Billing – Alcoholic DT's - [page 2]



- BLS Service:
  - Condition Code 436 Neurologic distress...abnormal movements with BLS HCPCS code.
  - Transportation Indicator – C5
- ALS or combined BLS/ALS Service:
  - Condition Code 436 Neurologic distress....abnormal movements with ALS HCPCS code.
  - Transportation Indicator - None

# BLS Dispatch/ BLS On-scene Condition

## Elder Abuse/Neglect – [page 1]

Dispatch Chief Complaint: 90 y/o female  
32B03 Unknown problem/unknown status

Dispatch Condition Code: None, BLS

On-scene Condition: Bed-confined patient with caregiver that appears to be under the influence of intoxicants. Patients appears stable, awake & alert X 2. Unable to contact relatives/guardians.

On-scene Condition Code: None, BLS





## Billing – Elder Abuse/Neglect – [page 2]

- BLS Service:
  - Condition Code: None with BLS HCPCS code.
  - Narrative: “bed-confined 90 y/o alone in residence with incapacitated caretaker. Unable to contact guardian”.
  - Transportation Indicator – None
- ALS or combined BLS/ALS Service:
  - Condition Code: None with BLS HCPCS code.
  - Narrative: Same as above
  - Transportation Indicator - None

# Non-emergency Transport

## ALS - [page 1]

Dispatch Request: Hospital to hospital. Pt with shortness of breath, myocardial ischemia, pulmonary edema.

Dispatch Condition Code: None, ALS request

On-scene Condition: 4/10 chest heaviness, BP 180/108, cardiac monitor and O2.

On-scene Condition Code: 428.9

Cardiac/hemodynamic monitoring required enroute, ALS



# Billing – Non-emergency Transport

[page 2]



- BLS Service:
  - Condition Code 428.9 – Cardiac/hemodynamic monitoring required enroute with BLS HCPCS code
  - Transportation Indicator – C5
- ALS or combined BLS/ALS Service:
  - Condition Code 428.9 – Cardiac/hemodynamic monitoring required enroute with ALS HCPCS code
  - Transportation Indicator - None

# Non-emergency

## ALS - [page 1]

Dispatch Request: Hospital to home. Bed confined patient being discharged to home with full cast on broken femur.

Dispatch Condition Code: None, BLS request.

On-scene Condition: 85 y/o with full leg cast on continuous BiPap for end-stage COPD. Home care nurse accepted care of patient at residence.

On-scene Condition Code: 518.81 Advanced airway management, ALS



# Billing – Non-emergency Transport

[page 2]



- BLS Service:
  - Condition Code 518.81 – Advanced airway management with BLS HCPCS code
  - Transportation Indicator – C5
- ALS or combined BLS/ALS Service:
  - Condition Code 518.81 – Advanced airway management with ALS HCPCS code
  - Transportation Indicator - None

# What Next?

- As you begin to use the codes, you can submit specific example questions to the AAA. Questions should be sent by e-mail to: [questions@the-aaa.org](mailto:questions@the-aaa.org).





Questions???