

2020 CPT Updates

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With the new year comes the annual Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) code updates. The CPT code set was established to better represent medical, surgical and diagnostic services for patients in a hospital outpatient setting or for professional services in a provider office setting. Each year updates go into effect on January 1.

The 2020 CPT updates consist of a total of 394 code changes and include 248 new codes, 71 code deletions and 75 code revisions. Among 2020's most prevalent CPT updates is the creation of code sets that allow providers the ability to better capture the use of digital communication, such as patient portals. Below are the six new codes in this code set:

Patient initial digital communications provided by a physician or other qualified health care professional

- 99421 – Online digital evaluation and management service, for an established patient, for up to 7 days, cumulative time during the 7 days; 5-10 minutes
- 99422 – 11-20 minutes
- 99423 – 21 or more minutes *additional coding guidance connected with the use of this code

Non-physician health care professional

- 98970 – Qualified non-physician health care professional online digital evaluation and management service, for an established patient, for up to 7 days, cumulative time during the 7 days; 5-10 minutes
- 98971 – 11-20 minutes
- 98972 – 21 or more minutes * additional coding guidance connected with the use of this code

As the advancement of home health and virtual visits continue to grow, two additional evaluation and management (E/M) codes were established to better support home blood pressure monitoring.

- 99473 – Self-measured blood pressure using a device validated for clinical accuracy; patient education/training and device calibration
- 99474 – Separate self-measurements of two readings one minute apart, twice daily over a 30-day period (minimum of 12 readings), collection of data reported by the patient and/or caregiver to the physician or other qualified health care professional, with report of

average systolic and diastolic pressure and subsequent communication of a treatment plan to the patient

The largest expansion to the 2020 CPT code set was the enhancement in codes for reporting long term electroencephalographic (EEG) monitoring services (95700 – 95726). Four codes were deleted and replaced with 23 new codes that provide better clarification around the EEG services provided. Deleted codes are:

- 95950 – Monitoring for identification and lateralization of cerebral seizure focus, electroencephalographic (eg, 8 channel EEG) recording interpretation, each 24 hours
- 95951 – Monitoring of localization of cerebral seizures focus by cable or radio, 16 or more channel telemetry, combined EEG and video recording and interpretation (eg, for presurgical localization) each 24 hours unattended
- 95953 – Monitoring of localization of cerebral seizure focus by computerized portable 16 or more channel EEG, EEG recording and interpretation, each 24 hours, unattended
- 95956 – Monitoring of localization of cerebral seizures focus by cable or radio, 16 or more channel telemetry, EEG recording and interpretation, each 24 hours, attended by a technologist or nurse

Additional 2020 code changes encompass health and behavioral assessment and intervention services. Six current codes will be replaced with nine new codes (96156, 96158, 96164, 96167, 96170 and add-on codes 96159, 96165, 96168, 96171). The new code addition will assist in more accurately reflecting interdisciplinary care coordination and teamwork with physicians in primary care and specialty settings.

References

American Medical Association (n.d.). CPT overview. Retrieved from ama-assn.org/amaone/cpt-current-procedural-terminology

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