

New York
165

Reimbursement for language assistance services in hospital inpatient settings:

Effective for hospital inpatient services provided on and after September 1, 2012, a Medicaid rate of payment for language interpretation services provided to patients with limited English proficiency (LEP) and communication services provided for patients who are deaf and hard of hearing will be established as follows:

- (1) Payment will be established on a per unit basis, with the unit of payment based on the number of minutes of language assistance services provided.
- (2) A maximum of two billable units of language assistance services will be allowable per patient per day with the billable units defined as follows:
 - i) 1st billable unit – for encounters providing one to 22 minutes of language assistance service.
 - ii) 2nd billable unit – for encounters providing additional minutes (23+) beyond the initial 22 minutes of language assistance services during the given patient day.
- (3) The rate of payment will be established at \$11.00 per unit of language assistance services, with a maximum payment per inpatient day of care of \$22.00. Such payment will be available on an “as provided only” basis via a separate and discretely billed rate, and will supplement the applicable DRG or exempt unit per diem payment for the given inpatient stay to account for the additional costs of inpatient services involving language assistance services.
- (4) To be reimbursable, the language assistance services must be provided by an independent third party, a dedicated hospital employee or a third party vendor (e.g., telephonic interpretation service) whose sole function is to provide interpretation services for individuals with LEP and communication services for patients who are deaf and hard of hearing.

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