

COVID-19 Information for our Health Care Provider Partners

To: Participating Physicians
Date: May 18, 2020
Subject: Commercial and Medicare Update for CPT Codes 99441-99443 and Expansion of E/M Codes Allowed for Safety Net Programs

Phone Only E/M Rate Update for CPT® Codes 99441-99443 for Commercial and Medicare

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services recently updated its reimbursement rates for telephone evaluation and management CPT codes 99441-99443 during the COVID-19 state of emergency. These changes were made retroactive to March 1, 2020.

Excellus BlueCross BlueShield will mirror the CMS reimbursement updates for our commercial and Medicare lines of business. We will automatically adjust claims billed with these codes for dates of services beginning March 1, 2020. There is no action required on your part and no need to contact Provider Relations or Customer Care to request adjustments. Please do not rebill claims previously submitted with these CPT codes.

The enhanced rates below for commercial and Medicare Advantage lines of business will remain in effect until the state of emergency is lifted.

CPT Code	Shortened Descriptor	Non-Facility Rate effective 3/1/2020	Facility Rate effective 3/1/2020
99441	Audio - Phone Only - MD/NP/PA Telephone evaluation and management, physician or qualified health care professional, established patient, 5-10 minutes	\$44.31	\$25.41
99442	Audio - Phone Only - MD/NP/PA Telephone evaluation and management, physician or qualified health care professional, established patient, 11-20 minutes	\$73.37	\$50.69
99443	Audio - Phone Only - MD/NP/PA Telephone evaluation and management, physician or qualified health care professional, established patient, 21-30 minutes	\$106.62	\$78.11

(Continued on the next page)

The telephone evaluation and management services listed above must be provided by a physician (or NP/PA) and may not originate from a related E/M service provided within the previous 7 days nor lead to an E/M service or procedure within the next 24 hours or soonest available appointment and must be documented in the medical record. Please continue to bill these telephone E/M codes with the appropriate place of service and modifier, if applicable. To review our telehealth coding guidance grid, visit our COVID-19 Resources page, Provider.ExcellusBCBS.com/coronavirus and select the *Telehealth Visits* section.

For telehealth services provided to Medicare members, providers must now bill CPT codes 99441-99443 if the services are provided by telephone only. Do not bill CPT codes 99201-99215 unless audio and video is used for the telehealth visit.

Expansion of E/M Codes Allowable via Telephone (Audio Only) for Safety Net Programs

The full range of office CPT codes used to bill new and established patient office visits (99201-99215) may now be provided through telehealth via telephone only for members enrolled in Safety Net* and commercial products during the State of Emergency. (These services may also be provided via real-time video or in-person.) Please include modifier GO with the applicable CPT code to indicate that services were provided telephonically (audio only).

For commercial and Safety Net lines of business, if a telephone service does not meet the criteria of these E/M codes, you should submit telephone codes 99441-99443.

If you have questions about this information, please contact us at Provider.Relations@excellus.com.

Thank you for the quality care and tireless service you are providing our valued members.

*Safety Net products = HMOBlue Option, Blue Choice Option, Premier Option, Blue Option Plus, Premier Option Plus, Child Health Plus, Premier Child Health Plus, Healthy NY and the Essential Plan