

CMS's Refusal to Pay Consults Makes MSP Claims a Headache

Medicare may have scratched consultations off of its list of payable services, but, so far, many other insurers did not follow suit. This leaves you in a quandary when your physician performs a consult and the primary insurer pays you for it, but Medicare is the secondary payer.

Since Medicare Secondary Payer (MSP) will not pay for consults, how do you bill and get paid for the consult you billed to the patient's primary carrier? [MLN Matters article MM6740](#), indicates the following:

“In MSP cases, physicians and others must bill an appropriate E/M code for the services previously paid using the consultation codes. If the primary payer for the service continues to recognize consultation codes,” you should bill in one of the following two ways:

- Bill the primary payer an E/M code, and then report the amount actually paid by the primary payer, along with the same E/M code, to Medicare for determination of whether a payment is due; or
- Bill the primary payer using a consult code, and then report the amount actually paid by the primary payer, along with an E/M code that is appropriate for the service, to Medicare for determination of whether a payment is due.

To download the MLN Matters article MM6740 go to <http://www.sccma.org> and click the “Download” tab under Reimbursement.