

M E D I C A R E

Know Your Part B MAC

It's important to ask the right questions to the right entity.

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Medicare Part B Coverage

While Medicare is a national program, it is administered on a local level by Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs). MACs can choose to issue Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs) and LCD Reference Articles for certain services. LCDs and LCD Reference Articles typically outline the documentation

requirements and documentation requirements for a Medicare Part B beneficiary receiving the same service in a different Part B MAC jurisdiction.

For example, the documentation requirements for a skin substitute application to a diabetic foot ulcer for a Medicare Part B beneficiary in Florida (First Coast Service Options jurisdic-

- Puerto Rico
- Virgin Islands

Palmetto GBA:²

- Alabama
- Georgia
- Tennessee
- South Carolina
- Virginia
- West Virginia
- North Carolina

Different Part B MACs may have different coverage policies for the same service.

requirements, coverage allowances, and coverage limitations for a service.

There are seven Part B MACs in the country. Different Part B MACs may have different coverage policies for the same service. This can result in a situation where the coverage guidelines and documentation requirements for a Medicare Part B beneficiary receiving a service in one Part B MAC jurisdiction can be differ-

ent than the coverage guidelines and documentation requirements for a Medicare Part B beneficiary receiving the same service in a different Part B MAC jurisdiction. For example, the documentation requirements for a skin substitute application to a diabetic foot ulcer for a Medicare Part B beneficiary in Ohio (CGS jurisdiction).

Part B MACs

The identity of the seven Part B MACs and their jurisdictions are:

- First Coast Service Options:¹
 - Florida

Novitas Solutions, Inc.:³

- Colorado
- New Mexico
- Oklahoma
- Texas
- Arkansas
- Louisiana
- Mississippi
- Delaware
- Washington DC
- Maryland
- New Jersey
- Pennsylvania

NGS, Inc.:⁴

- Illinois

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Part B MAC (from page 35)

- Minnesota
- Wisconsin
- Connecticut
- New York
- Maine
- Massachusetts
- New Hampshire
- Rhode Island
- Vermont

CGS Administrators, LLC⁵

- Kentucky
- Ohio

WPS Ins Corp⁶

- Iowa
- Kansas
- Missouri
- Nebraska
- Indiana
- Michigan

Noridian Healthcare Solutions, LLC⁷

- Alaska
- Idaho
- Oregon
- Washington
- Arizona
- Montana
- North Dakota
- South Dakota
- Utah
- Wyoming
- California
- Hawaii
- Nevada

Where to Go for Answers

Different Part B MACs often have different coverage guidelines for the same service. When seeking the coverage guidelines for a service performed for a Medicare Part B beneficiary, the great majority of the time, those guidelines are provided by the Part B MAC that has jurisdiction where the service was provided. Providers who ask what the “Medicare” guidelines are for a service are frequently asking the wrong question because most of the time it is actually the Part B MAC that is providing those guidelines.

Common Error #1

Providers often commit errors by asking the wrong question. An example includes Provider #1 who

sees patients in a state where Novitas is the Part B MAC with jurisdiction (see list above). Provider #1 asks, “What are the Medicare guidelines for coverage of service X?” This is the wrong question. Provider #2 sees patients in a state where Palmetto is the Part B MAC with jurisdiction (see list above). Provider #2 answers the question posed by Provider #1 by providing the Palmetto guidelines, but these Palmetto guidelines have no jurisdiction in the state where Provider #1 practices. If Provider #1 follows the guidance shared by Provider

jurisdiction where the service is to be performed. The websites for all seven of the Part B MACs are listed below. Providers may navigate to their Part B MAC’s website to review the coverage policies listed there.

Depending on the service, Medicare Advantage plans may have the same coverage policies as the Part B MAC with jurisdiction where the service was performed or they may have different coverage policies than the Part B MAC with jurisdiction where the service was performed. The only way to make this determination is to

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#2, they may be following the wrong guidelines. This problem could have been avoided in Provider #1’s original question was “What are the Novitas guidelines for coverage of service X?” instead of “What are the Medicare guidelines for coverage of service X?”

Common Error #2

A similar error is often made with online searches. If a provider searches for the “Medicare” guidelines regarding coverage of a service instead of their Part B MAC’s guidelines regarding coverage of a service, they may end up referencing guidelines that have no jurisdiction over the service they provided. This can be the case if two different Part B MACs have different coverage guidelines for the same service and the provider is using guidelines from a Part B MAC that does not have jurisdiction where the service was provided.

Finding the Guidelines

Each of the Part B MACs listed above list coverage guidelines for certain services on their websites. These are free, online, and publicly available. Providers seeking the Medicare Part B coverage guidelines for a service should use the list above to identify which Part B MAC has ju-

isdiction where the service was performed. The same can be said of all other non-Medicare payers. In some cases, non-Medicare payers copy the coverage guidelines of the Part B MAC with jurisdiction where the service was performed. Alternatively, non-Medicare payers may have coverage guidelines that differ from those of the Part B MAC with jurisdiction where the service was performed. The only way to determine this is to check with the third-party payer in question. **PM**

References

- ¹ <https://medicare.fcso.com>
- ² <https://palmettogba.com/>
- ³ <https://www.novitas-solutions.com/webcenter/portal/NovitasSolutions>
- ⁴ <https://www.ngsservices.com/>
- ⁵ <https://www.cgsmedicare.com/partb/>
- ⁶ <https://www.wpsgha.com/>
- ⁷ <https://med.noridianmedicare.com/>



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