



New Provider Basics - Medical Review Related Denials: New Patient versus Established Patient

"New patient" is defined as a patient who has not received any professional services from the physician within the previous three years. Physicians in the same group practice who are in the same specialty must bill and be paid as though they were a single physician. If no face to face encounter has previously occurred between the physician and the patient, then the patient may be coded as a new patient the first time a face to face encounter does occur.

Solely for the purposes of distinguishing between new and established patients, **professional services** are those face-to-face services rendered by a physician and reported by a specific CPT code(s). A new patient is one who has not received any professional services from the physician or another physician of the same specialty who belongs to the same group practice, within the past three years.

An established patient is one who has received professional services from the physician or another physician of the same specialty who belongs to the same group practice, within the past three years.

In the instance where a physician is on call for or covering for another physician, the patient's encounter will be classified as it would have been by the physician who is not available.

No distinction is made between new and established patients in the emergency department. Evaluation and Management services in the emergency department category may be reported for any new or established patient who presents for treatment in the emergency department.