

Wound Care Manufacturers

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Dear Drs. Brennan, Hoover, Mamuya, Moynihan and Hughes,

On behalf of the Coalition of Wound Care Manufacturers (“Coalition”), we are addressing our continued concerns related to the January 22nd DME MAC Correct Coding Article for Surgical Dressings Containing Non-Covered Components. The Coalition represents leading manufacturers of wound care products used by Medicare beneficiaries for the treatment of wounds including surgical dressings that is subject to this correct coding article. The Coalition has had a long history of working both with the DME MAC medical directors as they have developed medical policy and especially the surgical dressing policy since its creation and the PDAC as it addresses processes for coding and coding verification.

We continue to have two major concerns:

1. Such a fundamental change in how these products are coded and covered is more than just a simple clarification and should have been subject to a notice and comment period. When fundamental changes in policy – or even interpretation in policy – are made, the public has a right to receive notification as well as a right to comment. Neither CMS nor its contractors followed the process. The public was not afforded the opportunity to comment on these changes and it has directly impacted patient care as well as the financial viability of the companies involved. Furthermore, we understand that one of the manufacturers has filed an appeal.

Yet, the CMS contractors have made the determination not to cover the product while the appeal is going through the process. This goes against the very basic fundamentals of our legal system – due process. This is hugely problematic and can put companies out of business while the appeal is being considered. Until a decision has been rendered, the company should be able to maintain the the code and coverage before the change was made.

2. The PDAC took no time in changing the coding of surgical dressings containing medical grade honey to a non-covered code. The PDAC already knew what it was going to do – premeditated if you will. The process by which the PDAC reviewed and then changed honey impregnated gauze dressings from a covered HCPCS code to a non-covered code was far from transparent, predictable, accurate, or understandable and leaves us confused and concerned that random decisions that impact patients, clinicians and manufacturers can be made without any accountability.

The process is broken and we urge you to fix it!

As such –for the betterment of innovation, healthcare delivery, patient care and jobs we continue to request that the DME MACs rescind the January 22nd DME MAC Correct Coding Article for Surgical Dressings Containing Non-Covered Components and instead issue it in a format for notice and comment since it had such fundamental changes. We also request that the DME MACs and PDAC immediately reverse its recent decision classifying medical grade honey as non-covered and restore the HCPCS codes that were in place for honey dressings prior to the January 22 article and January 30 PDAC decision.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



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