



PROVIDER BULLETIN
#01-2019

TO: Participating facilities
FROM: Provider Network Services
DATE: January 18, 2019
SUBJECT: Claim adjudication process for MUE and NCCI edits

Independence Blue Cross (Independence) is committed to providing our employer-sponsored self-funded health plans with transparency regarding billing of health care services rendered to their employees. Ensuring provider use of appropriate modifier billing is an essential component toward this goal.

As of February 22, 2019, Independence will begin to apply Medically Unlikely Edits (MUE) and National Correct Coding Initiative (NCCI) edits via the original claim adjudication process versus the current retrospective audit process.

NCCI was created to prevent improper payment of procedures that should not be submitted together and an MUE is assigned to certain HCPCS/CPT[®] codes to identify the maximum units of service that a provider can perform on a patient on a given date of service. Independence supports these CMS-designed programs.

A system solution, effective February 22, 2019, will move the MUE and NCCI edit application from retrospective to prospective.

Change to billing requirements

Under the retrospective NCCI audit process, modifiers were not essential in identifying separate and distinct procedures. On October 18, 2018, Independence requested that providers begin billing with appropriate modifiers on all outpatient facility claims, if they have not been doing so already, to give providers ample time to update their billing systems to comply with the new requirement.

After the system solution is put in place for NCCI edits, modifiers must be included on outpatient claims, where appropriate. If the appropriate modifiers are not billed as of February 22, 2019, hospital outpatient claims lacking appropriate modifiers may be denied per NCCI editing rules.

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We encourage you to share this information with appropriate members of your staff.

For more information

For more information on NCCI edits and using modifiers, refer to the following Independence policies:

- **National Correct Coding Initiative (NCCI) Code Pair Edits**
 - **Commercial:** #00.01.56a: National Correct Coding Initiative (NCCI) Code Pair Edits
 - **Medicare Advantage:** #MA00.041: National Correct Coding Initiative (NCCI) Code Pair Edits
- **Modifiers XE, XS, XP, XU, 59**
 - **Commercial:** #03.00.08d: Modifiers XE, XS, XP, XU, 59
 - **Medicare Advantage:** #MA03.005a: Modifiers XE, XS, XP, XU, 59

To view these policies, visit our [Medical Policy Portal](#), select *Accept and Go to Medical Policy Online*, then select *Commercial* or *Medicare Advantage*, depending on which version of the policy you would like to view, and then type the policy name or number in the Search field.

If you have additional questions about this bulletin, please contact us at claimeditquestions@ibx.com.

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