



Medicare, Metro Lab and You: How CERT Audits Can Affect Your Bottom Line

Each year Medicare audits 50,000 randomly selected claims to see if they were paid correctly. CMS is then able to determine the rate of incorrect payment of claims. This audit is called **CERT: Comprehensive Error Rate Testing**. CERT audits primarily verify that the claims had sufficient documentation and accurate coding, and showed medical necessity.

For Metro Lab, the key point is that the physician must clearly document in the medical record his or her intent that a test be performed. During a CERT audit, we are asked to provide medical documentation, so we request and obtain your clinical notes for this purpose. If the notes are incomplete, unsigned, or don't include a diagnosis, CMS is quick to ask for a refund of payment. Should the ability to appeal be taken away due to timely filing guidelines, we have no alternative but to charge your office for the work performed.

If CMS finds multiple errors in documentation from an office, it could lead to a more in-depth investigation of that office. Adding notes after the audit will not make the audit go away. As a matter of fact, adding notes well after the date of service might be considered fraud.

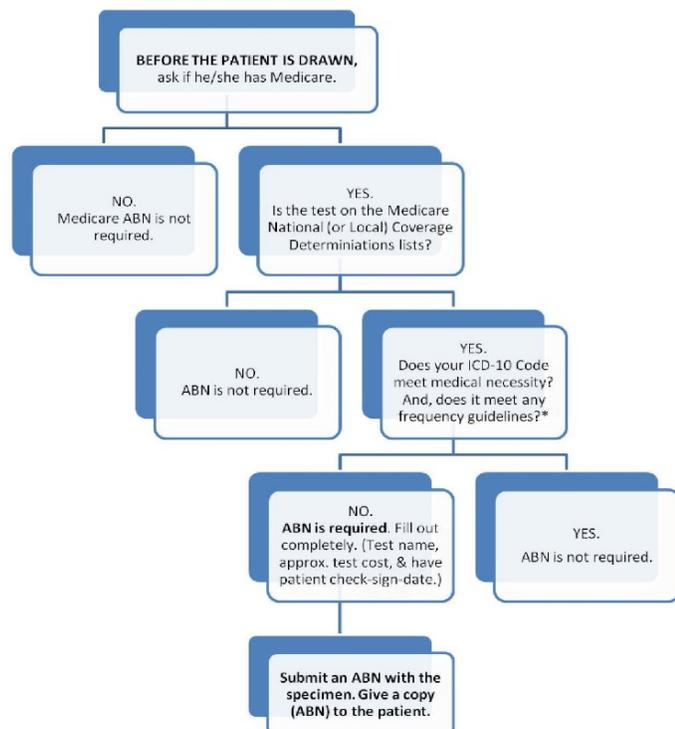
Here's an excerpt from the CMS 'Orders for Diagnostic Laboratory Testing' that sums up the eight page article. The full document can be found at www.MetroMedLab.com:

"Lack of documentation of either the physician's order for each laboratory test billed, or documentation within the beneficiary's clinical record to support the treating physician's intent to order the testing remains a persistent CERT error finding."

To find a short, easy to understand guideline for completing records when laboratory testing is to be ordered, visit our website for links to the www.CMS.gov Outreach and Education materials.



Medicare Advanced Beneficiary Notice (ABN) Workflow Required for Laboratory Test NCDs and LCDs



Source: www.cms.gov/Medicare/Coverage/CoverageGenInfo

*Tests with frequency guidelines include Lipid, Thyroid, A1c, PSA, Occult Blood, and Vitamin D.

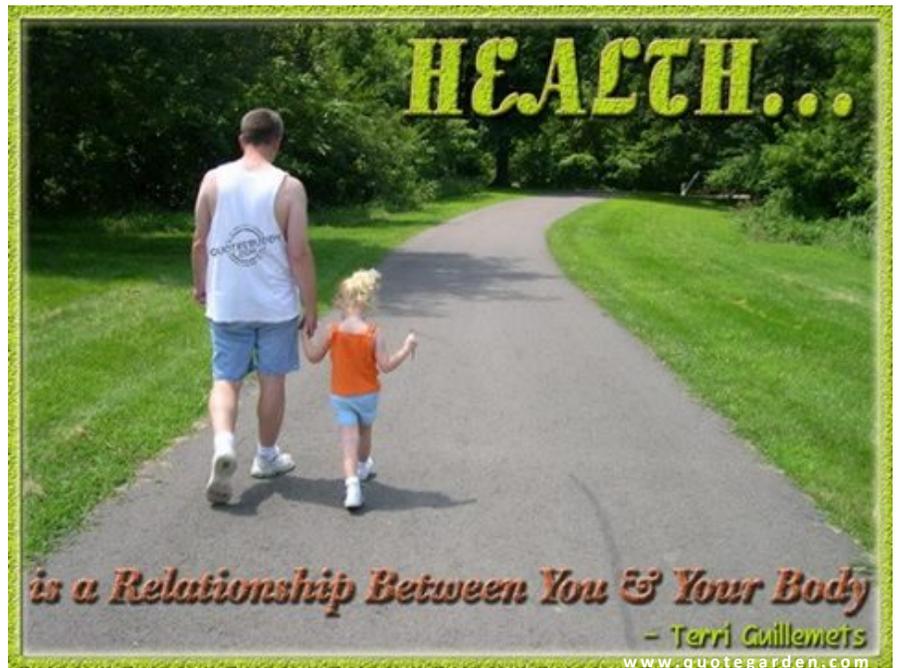
Questions? Call Metropolitan Medical Laboratory, PLC at (563)-324-0471 ext. 4728 to speak to Elizabeth.

Need ABNs? Order supplies online @ www.metromedlab.com, or call (309) 762-8555 ext. 3420.

METAL SPECIMEN LOCK BOXES AND SUMMER HEAT DON'T MIX

If your office is a frequent user of the specimen lock box for after-hours pick up, be sure to place an ice pack in the box if your specimens need to stay refrigerated. The ice pack will keep a slight chill inside the box until our courier arrives for the specimen. Of course, your office would have called to request the pick-up and would have recorded the control number from Dispatch or Client Service. That control number helps us determine when the call came in, who the call was assigned to, and when the job was completed.

Enjoy
Your
Summer.



As always, we appreciate your business and continued support.

Metropolitan Medical Laboratory, PLC

Quad Cities Pathologists, LLC

Moline – Davenport – Rock Island
Bettendorf – Silvis – Galesburg

Your Health – Your Lab – Your Choice



www.MetroMedLab.com

