Quick Guide

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE NEW PSYCHOTHERAPY CODES

IS IT TRUE THAT THE NEW PSYCHIATRIC DIAGNOSTIC INTERVIEW CODE, 90791, CAN BE USED MORE THAN ONCE FOR A PATIENT?
YES. 90791 can be used more than once if you require more than one interview to gather information to complete a diagnostic assessment. You may also use 90791 for the purposes of a reassessment when warranted.

WHEN CAN CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKERS USE THE PSYCHIATRIC DIAGNOSTIC INTERVIEW: EVALUATION AND MANAGEMENT, 90792?
NEVER. This code is an evaluation and management code which is used by health care professionals such as psychiatrists and other physicians, and clinical nurse specialists.

WHAT IS THE TIME FACTOR FOR PSYCHIATRIC DIAGNOSTIC INTERVIEW, 90791?
There is no time factor associated with 90791.

WHAT IS THE NEW CODE FOR FAMILY THERAPY?
The family therapy code, 90847, did not change and remains the same.

ARE THERE OTHER CODES THAT DID NOT CHANGE?
YES. The following other codes did not change:
90845  Psychoanalysis
90846  Family Psychotherapy without the patient present
90849  Multiple family group psychotherapy
90853  Group Psychotherapy
90880  Hypnotherapy
90889  Preparation of a report

WHAT ARE THE NEW PSYCHOTHERAPY CODES FOR INDIVIDUAL THERAPY?
The basic codes for individual psychotherapy include 90832, 90834, and 90837.

WHAT IS AN ADD-ON CODE?
An add-on code is a code used to identify an additional specific service provided at the same time as the base code.
WHAT IS AN INTERACTIVE COMPLEXITY CODE?
The interactive complexity code, 90785, is an add-on code to report services in conjunction with the psychotherapy codes, 90791, 90832, 90834, 90837 and 90853. It is specific communication factors that complicate the delivery of psychiatric services and is reported when using play equipment, or other physical devices, interpreter, or translator to communicate with the patient to overcome barriers to therapeutic or diagnostic interaction between the clinical social worker and the patient. The patient usually has involved in its care third-parties such as parents, guardians, child welfare agencies, caregivers and/or schools.

HOW DO I CODE INTERACTIVE COMPLEXITY, 90785, ON THE CMS-1500 FORM?
90785 is recorded on line 24 D of the CMS-1500 Form below the identified primary CPT code.

WHAT ARE THE TIME FACTORS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOTHERAPY CODES?
The time factors for the individual psychotherapy codes are:
90832, 30 minutes – 16 to 37 minutes
90834, 45 minutes – 38 to 52 minutes
90837, 60 minutes – 53 minutes or more

WHAT IS THE TIME FACTOR FOR GROUP THERAPY, 90853?
90853 does not have a time associated with it.

WHAT IS A MODIFIER?
A modifier provides the means to report or indicate that a service or procedure performed has been altered by some specific circumstance but not changed in its definition or code. Modifiers are always two numbers or letters.

HOW IS 90839, PSYCHOTHERAPY FOR CRISIS, DEFINED?
It is defined as an urgent assessment and history of a crisis state, a mental status exam and disposition. The presenting problem is life threatening or complex and requires immediate attention to a patient in high distress.

FOR 2012 CLAIM SERVICES BILLED IN 2013, WHAT CODES ARE USED TO FILE A CLAIM FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY SERVICES?
The correct codes to use are the old psychiatric codes used in 2012.

IN ADDITION TO THE RESOURCES OFFERED BY NASW, IS THERE A BOOK THAT DISCUSSES THE CODES IN DEBT?
YES, it is called CPT 13: Professional Edition and is published by the American Medical Association.

DID NASW PARTICIPATE IN THE REVISION PROCESS OF THE PSYCHOTHERAPY CODES?
YES, NASW participated in the revision process of the psychotherapy codes and was an active participant on the CPT Editorial Panel Workgroup for Psychiatric Services.