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Multiple Procedure Payment Reduction Policy Change for 2013

In the 2013 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Final Rule, CMS finalized the multiple procedure payment reduction (MPPR) policy, expanding it to now apply to multiple physicians in the same group practice (ie, practicing under the same group NPI).

In the CY 2012 Final Rule, CMS finalized a policy to apply the multiple procedure payment reduction (MPPR) to the technical component (TC) and professional component (PC) of the second and subsequent studies of certain advanced imaging procedures (ie, CT, MRI, and ultrasound) rendered to the same patient in the same session by a single physician, or multiple physicians, in the same group practice. However, due to operational limitations at the time, CMS was unable to apply this policy to multiple physicians in a group. Consequently, the MPPR was applied only when the same physician rendered the affected services.

Moving into 2013, CMS indicated that it had resolved its operational restrictions and would begin applying the MPPR for advanced diagnostic imaging services rendered on or after January 1, 2013, to multiple physicians as well as individual physicians within the same group. Essentially this means that the payment reduction will apply when one or more physicians sharing a group NPI provide multiple advanced imaging services to the same patient, in the same session, on the same date of service. Payment under this policy dictates that the procedure with the highest professional component (PC) reimbursement will be paid in full with the PC reimbursement for each subsequent procedure reduced by 25%.

Specific to the professional component, CMS defines a session as 'when the studies are interpreted by the radiologist;' however, clear guidance has not been offered for what CMS constitutes as the 'same session' prompting industry speculation that date of service will be the governing rule for adjudicating claims for the professional component.