Different Specialties, Same Tax ID

August 13, 2015

Question:
Can you help clarify the new patient rules related to multiple specialties in the same group practice? If we have different specialties (e.g., Pain Management, Podiatry, Rheumatology, Orthopaedics) can we charge a New Visit code when the patient is seen for the first time by a physician in a different specialty in the practice?

Answer:
Yes, the CPT rules and Medicare rules both allow the new patient visit rules in your scenario, which is very common in large multi-specialty groups or academic centers where all specialties bill under the same tax ID. The following is a direct citation from the 2015 AMA CPT Manual: “Solely for the purposes of distinguishing between new and established patients, professional services are those face-to-face services rendered by physicians and other qualified health care professionals who may report evaluation and management services reported by a specific CPT code(s). A new patient is one who has not received any professional services from the physician/qualified health care professional or another physician/qualified health care professional of the exact same specialty and subspecialty who belongs to the same group practice, within the past three years.”

Thanks for reaching out to KZA for your coding needs!