

Hospice Face-to-Face & Benefit Periods

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Home Health VNA
Merrimack Valley Hospice
HomeCare, Inc.



The Leaders in Home Health and Hospice Care

Objectives

- ▶ The participant will be able to discuss the Face-to-Face (FTF) requirements
- ▶ The participant will be able to describe the Hospice Benefit Periods

Hospice Benefit Periods

- ▶ The Medicare Hospice benefit consists of 90-day benefit periods and an unlimited number of 60-day benefit periods.
- ▶ The benefit periods must be used in that order (90-90-60)
- ▶ The two 90-day benefit periods are not renewable – once they are used, the beneficiary has only 60-day benefit periods remaining.

Hospice Benefit Periods

- ▶ If a beneficiary revokes or is discharged from Hospice care, the remaining days in the benefit period are lost
- ▶ Patient may be entering 3rd benefit period even if not on service for 6 months already
- ▶ Ask on admission “Have you ever been on Hospice before?”
- ▶ If/when the beneficiary meets the Hospice coverage requirements, they can re-elect the Hospice benefit, and will begin with the next benefit period.

Hospice Face-to-Face

- ▶ The recertification associated with a Hospice patient's third benefit period, and every subsequent recertification, must include documentation that a Hospice physician or a Hospice nurse practitioner had a face-to-face (FTF) encounter with the patient.

Hospice Face-to-Face

- ▶ The FTF encounter must document the clinical findings supporting a life expectancy of 6 months or less
- ▶ When the FTF requirements are not met, the patient is no longer eligible for the Medicare Hospice benefit.

Time Frame for the Encounter

- ▶ The FTF encounter must occur within 30 calendar days prior to the start of the third benefit period and each subsequent recertification
- ▶ In documented exceptional circumstances, for a new Hospice admission in the third or later benefit period, the FTF encounter is considered to be timely when performed within 2 days after admission

Time Frame for the Encounter

- ▶ In addition, if the patient dies within 2 days of admission, a FTF encounter is considered to be complete

Who Performs & Signs the FTF Encounter

- ▶ The FTF encounter must be performed by a Hospice physician or a Hospice NP
- ▶ The Hospice physician must be employed by the Hospice, a volunteer, or working under contract
- ▶ The Hospice NP must be employed by the Hospice

FTF Requirements

- ▶ The Hospice physician or NP must attest in writing that he or she had a FTF encounter with the patient, including the date of the encounter
- ▶ The attestation, which must be a separate and distinct part of the recertification, or as an addendum to the recertification associated with the third benefit period

FTF Requirements

- ▶ Clearly titled
- ▶ Accompanying signature, and date signed by the individual who performed the visit
- ▶ Date of the visit
- ▶ Clinical findings to determine continued Hospice eligibility
- ▶ When the Hospice NP/non-certifying physician performs the FTF, the attestation must also state that the clinical findings were provided to the certifying physician

FTF Fact Sheet

- ▶ Review the “FTF” Fact Sheet