

Consultation Updates From ASCO

As you know by now, CMS will no longer cover the consultation codes as of January 1, 2010.

- On December 15, CMS released [Transmittal 1875 \(CR 6740\)](#), "Revisions to Consultation Services Payment Policy." This transmittal contains information on selecting E&M codes in 2010 given the elimination of the consult codes.

The consultation codes have not been deleted in the CPT manual for 2010; however, Medicare will no longer recognize them. (The agency has adjusted some of the relative values in the established and new patient visit codes to cover some of the work from consultations.)

- Recently the American Gastroenterological Association (AGA) obtained a clarification from CMS regarding the coverage of consultations under Medicare Advantage plans. The clarification is provided below and can be viewed on the [AGA website](#).

"...the Medicare Advantage plans can choose to follow our coding policies, but they are not required to do so." Thus, the elimination of payment for consultation codes in fee-for-service Medicare does not automatically apply to Medicare Advantage or other Medicare managed care products."

- Senator Arlen Specter (D-Pa) filed an amendment (SA 3163) on December 10 to delay elimination of the consult codes by one year. We will keep you updated on the status of this amendment.

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