

Medicare Coverage of Laboratory Testing

As a participant in a federally funded healthcare program, PeaceHealth Laboratories is committed to the highest degree of reliability, honesty, and business integrity. As part of this commitment, we have implemented an Organizational Integrity program which set forth standards and rules of ethical business conduct for all employees and those with whom we do business. To meet compliance recommendations set forth by the government through the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), PeaceHealth Laboratories provides this notice.

When ordering laboratory tests that are billed to Medicare/Medicaid or other federally-funded programs, the following requirements should be observed.

1. Only tests that are medically necessary for the diagnosis or treatment of the patient should be ordered.
2. Medicare requires providers to document medical necessity (ICD-9 codes) for each laboratory test ordered for a Medicare beneficiary.
3. **SIGNATURE REQUIREMENT** Medicare requires a legible hand written or valid electronic signature in the Medical Record for all ordered laboratory tests. Without proper signatures, the order is considered invalid and cannot be used to support payment for services rendered and orders given.
4. Medicare pays for only a few approved screening tests. For a comprehensive list, please visit the Medicare website www.noridianmedicare.com.
5. See PeaceHealth Laboratories' Medicare Coverage Policies booklet for National and Local Coverage Decisions (NCDs and LCDs).
6. If there is reason to believe that Medicare may not pay for a test, the patient should be informed in advance. The patient should sign an Advance Beneficiary Notice (ABN) to indicate that he or she accepts financial responsibility if Medicare denies payment.
7. Panels and profiles should be ordered and billed to Medicare only when each and every component of the panel is medically necessary.
8. PeaceHealth Laboratories makes available the services of a clinical consultant (pathologist or clinical scientist) to assist the physician in ordering appropriate tests. Call 541-684-2134 or 800-826-3616 to contact a clinical consultant.
9. When a claim is denied as not medically necessary, Medicare allows the patient to appeal the denial. PeaceHealth Laboratories financial services department will assist your patients with this process.
10. Medicare education is available to you and your staff. Please contact your Client Relations Specialist for additional information.