



Guide to Better Restorative Care

Skilled Nursing Facilities struggle to know what to bill to Medicare Part A. Under the PPS method of payment, the provision of low rehab and nursing restorative programs qualify the patient for extended periods of recovery that have not been appropriately utilized. After the therapists have performed five days per week of direct therapy programs, much more is attainable for the patients' restorative process.

Following are the reimbursable restorative services that can be instituted by the nursing department through a ramping down from three days per week of therapy involvement to full nursing restorative programming:

- Strengthening
- Muscle tone
- Range of motion
- Balance
- Ambulation
- Sitting
- Standing
- Gait
- Gross motor skills
- Fine motor skills
- Cognitive skills
- Communication skills
- Dressing skills
- Grooming skills
- Bathing skills
- Wheelchair and bed transfer skills
- Bed mobility skills
- Nutritional and eating habits
- Homemaking skills
- Behavior modification
- Reality orientation

These programs follow the rule that all patients are to be given the opportunity to show progress. Progress is defined as substantial improvement in light of the degree of impairment, a stop in the decline of functioning, or sustaining a level of functioning that

allows patients to attain the highest level of independence possible and sustain their ADL's (activities of daily living for dressing, grooming, bathing, eating, ambulating and communicating) more effectively.

Each program qualifies a patient for extended Medicare coverage. Up to 100 days of Part A rehabilitation and restoration coverage is available per spell of illness. The criteria for patients to qualify for these programs are: 1) the service relates to a three day hospital stay; 2) the patient is responding to an approved plan of treatment from the doctor; and 3) the program is designed by a licensed therapist and/or rehab nurse. Programs are to be conducted by a trained Rehab Aide at least six days per week, 15 minutes per program per day. The 15-minute time period is to include transport, set-up and charting of the intervention.

The programs qualify for the following reimbursements:

- Rehab low RUG's Grouper (Resource Utilization Groups) reimbursement under Medicare Part A if the licensed therapist is involved in the case at least three visits per week for 15 minutes per visit.
 - During these visits, the therapists typically observe the Rehab Aide in carrying out the intervention, reestablishing the goal, or performing hands on prompting for the patient and the staff person.
- Restorative nursing reimbursement in the lower 18 RUG's Groupers under Medicare Part A.
 - The program is to be conducted at least six days per week, 15 minutes per program per day by a trained Restorative Nursing Aide.

Restorative Equipment:

Bow-flex machine (or similar product) and fitness trail:

- Strengthening
- Muscle tone
- Range of motion
- Balance
- Ambulation
- Sitting
- Standing
- Gait
- Gross motor skills
- Wheelchair and bed transfer skills
- Bed mobility skills

Hand-eye coordination (balls, darts, games)

- Fine motor skills
- Cognitive skills

Role playing and home-style equipment (bath tub, stove, refrigerator, dish washing, clothes washing equipment, counter tops)

- Nutritional and eating habits

- Homemaking skills
- Dressing skills
- Grooming skills
- Bathing skills

Talking books, puzzles, games

- Cognitive skills
- Communication skills
- Behavior modification
- Reality orientation

Structuring the program around an assessed problem reimbursement is justified and the necessity for Medicare to pay for the program is confirmed as the staff tracks the progress towards a preset goal (outcome). The goals should use the MDS scales of 0 to 4 (zero being independent, 1 being supervised, 2 being limited assistance and 4 being extensive assistance) to establish the baseline deficit to set outcome goals. By using these numerical scales, the evaluator can easily show progress or decline in the patients' functional status.