

December 2010

## **Immunosuppressive Drugs – Coverage Criteria and Physician Documentation Requirements**

Dear Physician,

Immunosuppressive drugs are covered by Medicare Part B for patients who have had an organ transplant when the following conditions have been met:

- The transplant was performed when the patient was enrolled in Medicare Part A.
- The transplant met all Medicare coverage criteria in effect at the time of the transplant—e.g., national/local medical necessity criteria and approved facility.

Immunosuppressive drugs for patients whose transplant was performed prior to enrollment in Medicare Part A or for conditions other than an organ transplant are eligible for coverage by Medicare Part D.

When you are initially ordering immunosuppressive drugs, it is important that you clearly document in your medical records the patient's diagnosis, date (month and year) of the transplant, and the name of the hospital where the transplant was performed. This documentation could be either the hospital discharge summary or your office notes. Simply listing that information on the order or on a form provided by the supplier is not sufficient.

On an ongoing basis, when you see your patient for follow-up visits, it is important that you document the continued need for and use of these drugs.

There must be a detailed written order that lists the drugs with the dosage and frequency of administration. This document may be prepared by the supplier, but you must review it, initial and date any changes, and then personally sign and date the order. Signature and date stamps are not acceptable. Electronic signatures are acceptable. Verbal orders alone are not sufficient for Medicare coverage.

Physicians can view the complete local coverage determination and policy article titled Immunosuppressive Drugs on the National Government Services Web site at [www.NGSMedicare.com](http://www.NGSMedicare.com). It may also be viewed in the local coverage section of the Medicare Coverage Database at [www.cms.hhs.gov/mcd/search.asp](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/mcd/search.asp)

Suppliers may ask you to provide the documentation from your medical records on a routine basis in order to assure that Medicare will pay for these drugs and that your patient will not be held financially liable. Providing this documentation is in compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act Privacy Rule. No specific authorization is required from your patient. Also note that you may not charge the supplier or the beneficiary to provide this information. Please cooperate with the supplier so that they can provide the immunosuppressive drugs that are needed by your patient.

Sincerely,

Stacey V. Brennan, M.D., FAAFP  
Medical Director, DME MAC, Jurisdiction B