

June 25, 2009

Montana Healthcare Programs Notice

Optometric, Optician

Optical Services Paid by RBRVS

Effective July 1, 2009

The Department is implementing a 2 percent increase in reimbursement for all Allied Health providers. In addition, the Relative Value Units (RVUs) increased by 9 percent on average for all Medicaid providers. These changes have put a significant strain on funds budgeted for services to Medicaid clients and maintain budget neutrality. Payment for a service using the Resource Based Relative Value Scale (RBRVS) system is determined by multiplying the (1) relative value unit (RVU) of the service by the (2) conversion factor for the provider performing the service and any (3) rate variable.

Presently the following providers or services receive an enhanced RBRVS payment using a rate variable: maternity services; family planning services; **optical services**; and psychiatrist services. The Department is moving toward a clean RBRVS reimbursement system that does not include enhanced payments through rate variables. The Department has chosen to reduce the amount of these rate variables in excess of 100 percent by one half.

Optical services paid by RBRVS presently receive 125 percent of the Allied Health payment rate. Their payment will be reduced to 112 percent of the Allied Health payment rate. Optical providers will still be reimbursed 13 percent more than other Allied Health providers.

This rate variable is not sensitive to the date of service of the submitted claim. In order to implement this change, the rate variable will be changed on September 1, 2009, from 125 percent to 112 percent. This delay in implementation will allow time for optometric providers to submit their claims for services prior to July 1, 2009, and have them paid at the 125 percent rate of reimbursement. On September 1, 2009, the rate variable will be changed and all claims will be reimbursed at the 112 percent rate variable. **Every effort should be made to bill for optometric services rendered prior to July 1, 2009, before the September 1, 2009, change to prevent these claims from paying at the lower rate.**

Any claims processed between July 1 and August 31, 2009, for dates of service on or after July 1, 2009, will be paid at the 125 percent level and then adjusted to the 112 percent rate when the rate variable is changed on September 1, 2009.

Contact Information

For rates or policy questions, contact Rena Steyaert at rsteyaert@mt.gov or (406) 444-4066.

For claims questions or additional information, contact Provider Relations:

Provider Relations toll-free in- and out-of-state: 1-800-624-3958

Helena: (406) 442-1837

E-mail: MTPRHelpdesk@ACS-inc.com

Visit the Provider Information website:

<http://www.mtmedicaid.org>