

Annual Wellness Coverage for Medicare Beneficiaries

On Dec. 2, 2010, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a memo reminding all Medicare Advantage organizations of the recently published [CY 2011 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule \(MPFS\)](#) implementing provisions in the Affordable Care Act that provide Medicare coverage for personalized prevention plan services, including the **new annual wellness visit beginning Jan. 1, 2011**.

This new annual wellness visit (AWV) augments the Initial Preventive Physical Examination (IPPE) or “Welcome to Medicare Exam” with an annual wellness visit that allows the physician and beneficiary to develop a personalized prevention plan that considers not only the age-appropriate preventive services generally available to Medicare beneficiaries, but additional services that may be appropriate because of the patient’s individual health status. Both the IPPE and the new annual wellness visit are covered at zero cost sharing by UCare and under original Medicare in 2011.

What does this mean for UCare members?

- UCare already covers all **Medicare covered preventive services** without member cost-sharing.
- UCare will cover the new annual wellness visit effective January 1, 2011.
- UCare will cover the annual wellness visit using the newly released procedure codes.

Annual Wellness Visit Overview:

- **Components of AWV:** Please refer to the resources listed below for a complete overview of the components of an initial (first) annual wellness visit and subsequent annual wellness visit.
- **Coding:** CMS created the following two new procedure codes for this new benefit:
 - **G0438** – Annual wellness visit, including personalized prevention plan services, first visit - (once in a lifetime).
 - **G0439** – Annual wellness visit, including personalized prevention plan services, subsequent visit.
- **Provider Requirements:** May be performed by a M.D. or D.O., by a qualified nurse practitioner, physician assistant or clinical nurse specialist, or by a health professional (a medical professional including a health educator, registered dietitian, nutrition professional, or other licensed practitioner), or a team of such medical professionals who are working under the direct supervision of a physician.
- **Resources:**
 - Medicare Claims Processing Manual: Pub 100-4, Chapter 12, Sections 30.6.1.1 and 100.1.1; Pub 100-4, Chapter 18, Section 140.
 - Medicare Benefit Policy Manual: Pub 100-2, Chapter 15, Section 280.5.
 - MLN Article: MM7079, <http://www.cms.gov/MLN Matters Articles/downloads/MM7079.pdf>.