



TEXAS & NEW MEXICO HOSPICE ORGANIZATION

FAQ: Medicaid Hospice and the Service Intensity Add-on

Disclaimer: The answers provided in this document are the result of the Texas and New Mexico Hospice Organization's research and analysis. If you have specific questions on rules and our interpretation, contact the Medicaid Utilization Review (UR) Division at the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC).

Question: The HHSC letter outlines five criteria that must be met for the Service Intensity Add-on (SIA). Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) have four criteria. HHSC's fifth criterion is "the skilled services provided must be clearly documented". Is HHSC utilizing the definition of "skilled" as outlined for continuous home care under §266.211 Continuous Home Care?

Answer: No. "Skilled" as defined under §266.211 Continuous Home Care is strictly for continuous home care. Providers must refer to the definition as outlined under 26 TAC §558.2 (114) *Skilled services -- Services in accordance with a plan of care that require the skills of:*

- (A) a registered nurse;
- (B) a licensed vocational nurse;
- (C) a physical therapist;
- (D) an occupational therapist;
- (E) a respiratory therapist;
- (F) a speech-language pathologist;
- (G) an audiologist;
- (H) a social worker; or
- (I) a dietitian.

The registered nurse (RN) and social worker (SW) will refer back to their professional licensure rules for guidance.

Question: Do both the SW and RN services have to be provided at the same time for the provider to be reimbursed?

Answer: No. CMS is very clear that both or one profession can be in the home providing a service for no more than four (4) hours a day during the last seven (7) days of the recipient's life, if criteria are met.

Question: Will HHSC review the service intensity add-on like the utilization review staff do for continuous home care?

Answer: No. While the payment is equal to the Continuous Home Care (CHC) hourly payment rate multiplied by the amount of direct patient care provided by a RN or SW during the last seven (7) days of a person's life, it is not the same. CHC is provided only during periods of crisis to maintain the recipient at the recipient's place of residence. SIA is for skilled care provided by an RN or SW during a person's last seven (7) days of life. Remember, the term "skilled" is defined under §558.2 (114) and each profession's respective licensure rules. It is important to remember that HHSC UR staff will be reviewing documentation that the provider submits to them. The documentation must show what the RN or SW did while they were in the home. Include the time in and out in the documentation.

Question: How will billing and payment work?

Answer: All documentation supporting the claim for the higher rate will need to be submitted prior to the provider getting an authorization to bill for this service.

Question: Where do we mail our information into:

Answer:

For mail sent via the United States Postal Service (USPS):

Health and Human Services Commission
Medicaid Hospice Utilization Review
PO Box 149030
MC 0222
Austin, TX 78714

For mail sent via FedEx or UPS:

Health and Human Services Commission
Medicaid Hospice Utilization Review
701 W 51st St.
MC 0222
Austin, TX 78751

If you have any questions or concerns about mailing information to UR, contact the MHUR mailbox at: mhur@hhsc.state.tx.us.

Question: What if I want to submit my documentation in overnight mail? Can we use the address provided in the information letter?

Answer: Yes. HHSC staff will sign for the package upon receipt in the mailroom. It is important that provider staff maintain copies of everything submitted to HHSC and receipts for overnight mail. The information is provided above as well.

Question: Why is HHSC doing a 100% review? CMS does not require this. It seems burdensome to both HHSC and the provider.

Answer: HHSC is looking into the process of preparing the IT systems to process the SIA payment. HHSC UR determined that 100% reviews would need to be done until the IT changes were completed.

Resources:

- Information Letter 15-78 Medicaid Hospice Service Intensity Add-On Payment. <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/providers/communications/2015/letters/IL2015-78.pdf>
- 26 Texas Administrative Code Chapter 266 Medicaid Hospice: https://texas-sos.appianportalsgov.com/rules-and-meetings?chapter=266&interface=VIEW_TAC&part=1&title=26.