

rounded down to the whole dollar amount.

Computation of Calendar Year 2009 Medication Copayment Amount Includes:

- a. Prescription Drug Medical Consumer Price Index as of September 30, 2008 = 377.1.
- b. Prescription Drug Medical Consumer Price Index as of September 30, 2001 = 304.8.
- c. Index = 377.1 divided by 304.8 = 1.2371.
- d. (INDEX) \times \$7 = \$8.66.
- e. Copayment amount = \$8.00.

Dated: December 4, 2008.

Gordon Mansfield,

Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Reasonable Charges for Medical Care or Services; 2009 Calendar Year Update

AGENCY: Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Title 38 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), § 17.101 sets forth the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical regulations concerning "reasonable charges" for medical care or services provided or furnished by VA to a veteran for: (1) A non-service-connected disability for which the veteran is entitled to care or the payment of expenses for care under a health plan contract; (2) a non-service-connected disability incurred incident to the veteran's employment and covered under a worker's compensation law or plan that provides reimbursement or indemnification for such care and services; or (3) a non-service-connected disability incurred as a result of a motor vehicle accident in a State that requires automobile accident reparations insurance.

The regulations include methodologies for establishing billed amounts for the following types of charges: Acute inpatient facility charges; skilled nursing facility and sub-acute inpatient facility charges; partial hospitalization facility charges; outpatient facility charges; physician and other professional charges, including professional charges for anesthesia services and dental services; pathology and laboratory charges;

observation care facility charges; ambulance and other emergency transportation charges; and charges for durable medical equipment, drugs, injectables, and other medical services, items, and supplies identified by Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) Level II codes. The regulations also provide that data for calculating actual charge amounts at individual VA facilities based on these methodologies will either be published as a notice in the **Federal Register** or will be posted on the Internet site of the Veterans Health Administration Chief Business Office, currently at <http://www.va.gov/cbo>, under "Charge Data." The charge tables and supplemental tables that are applicable to this **Federal Register** notice can be viewed on the Veterans Health Administration Chief Business Office's Intranet and Internet Web sites. Certain charges are hereby updated as described in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** Section of this notice. These changes are effective January 1, 2009.

In circumstances when charges for medical care or services provided or furnished at VA expense, by either VA or non-VA providers, have not been established under other provisions or regulations, the method for determining VA's charges is set forth at 38 CFR 17.101(a)(8).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Romona Greene, Chief Business Office (168), Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420, (202) 461-1595. (This is not a toll-free number.)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Of the charge types listed in the Summary section of this notice, acute inpatient facility charges and skilled nursing facility/sub-acute inpatient facility charges are not being changed. Acute inpatient facility charges remain the same as set forth in a notice published in the **Federal Register** on October 1, 2008 (73 FR 57219). VA's current inpatient charge structure utilizes the methodology set forth in 38 CFR 17.101 and does not itemize inpatient bills. Skilled nursing facility/sub-acute inpatient facility charges also remain the same as set forth in a notice published in the **Federal Register** on October 1, 2008 (73 FR 57219).

Based on the methodologies set forth in 38 CFR 17.101, this document provides an update to charges for 2009 HCPCS Level II and Current Procedural Technology (CPT) codes. Charges are

also being updated based on more recent versions of data sources for the following charge types: Partial hospitalization facility charges; outpatient facility charges; physician and other professional charges, including professional charges for anesthesia services and dental services; pathology and laboratory charges; observation care facility charges; ambulance and other emergency transportation charges; and charges for durable medical equipment, drugs, injectables, and other medical services, items, and supplies identified by HCPCS Level II codes. These updated charges are effective January 1, 2009.

In this update, we are retaining the table designations used for HCPCS Level II and Current Procedural Technology (CPT) Codes in the notice posted on the Internet site of the Veterans Health Administration Chief Business Office currently at <http://www.va.gov/cbo>, under "Charge Data." The effective date of this change was December 26, 2007 and the notice can also be found in the **Federal Register** (72 FR 73063).

Accordingly, the tables identified as being updated by this notice correspond to the applicable tables posted on the Internet with the notice, beginning with Table C.

VA has updated the list of data sources presented in Supplementary Table 1 to reflect the updated data sources used to establish the updated charges described in this notice.

The list of VA medical facility locations has also been updated. As a reminder, in Supplementary Table 3 we set forth the list of VA medical facility locations, which includes the first three digits of their zip codes and provider based/non-provider based designations.

Consistent with the VA's regulations, the updated data tables and supplementary tables containing the changes described in this notice will be posted on the Internet site of the Veterans Health Administration Chief Business Office, currently at <http://www.va.gov/cbo>, under "Charge Data (Rates)." The updated data tables and supplementary tables containing the changes described will be effective until changed by a subsequent **Federal Register** notice.

Approved: December 4, 2008.

Gordon H. Mansfield,

Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

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