

2023 Evaluation and Management Changes:

Consultations

Reporting

Consultation services are described with CPT codes 99242-99245 (office and outpatient) and 99252-99255 (inpatient and observation). A consultation is provided by a physician or qualified healthcare professional at the request of another physician, qualified healthcare professional, or other professional source. Consultations may not be initiated by a patient, family member, or caregiver. ¹

Office and Outpatient Consultations (CPT codes 99242-99245)

Follow up services initiated by the consulting provider or patient are reported with established patient office and outpatient evaluation and management services (CPT codes 99212, 99213, 99214, 99215). If the management of the patient's care (either in its entirety or for a specific condition) is transferred to the consulting provider, the next visit should be reported with the appropriate new or established office and outpatient evaluation management codes (CPT codes 99202-99215).

Inpatient and Observation Consultations (99252-99255)

In an inpatient and observation setting consultations may only be reported if the patient has not received any face-to-face professional services from the physician or other qualified health care professional or another physician or other qualified health care professional of the exact same specialty and subspecialty who belongs to the same group practice during the stay.

Only one consultation service may be reported by a consultant per admission. If a consultation occurs before or in relation to an admission with a subsequent encounter or occurs in subsequent visits, the appropriate subsequent inpatient or observation hospital care code should be reported (CPT codes 99231-99233).

Reimbursement

Consultation services are not reimbursable under the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule but will remain in the AMA CPT Professional Edition in 2023. Private payer reimbursement for consultations may differ, therefore be sure to check policies for details.

¹ American Medical Association. "CPT® Evaluation and Management (E/M) Code and Guideline Changes". 2022. <https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/2023-e-m-descriptors-guidelines.pdf>

Changes in 2023

The code descriptions and guidelines for consultation services will be updated along with the other Evaluation and Management services in 2023.

2022	2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selection based on history, exam and medical decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selection based on medical decision making or time, but an appropriate history and/or exam should still be performed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time in code description is noted as a “typical” time (ex. “Typically, 60 minutes are spent face-to-face with the patient and/or family.”) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time in code description is a specific number of minutes that must be met or exceeded on a date of service (ex. “When using total time on the date of the encounter for code selection, 40 minutes must be met or exceeded”.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time only includes the time spent face-to-face with the patient and/or family. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time includes face-to-face and non-face-to-face activities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation codes may only be reported based on time if 50% of the visit is counseling and/or coordination of care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation codes may be reported based on time whether the visits are 50% counseling and/or coordination of care.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A prolonged service may not be reported with consultation services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A prolonged service code (99417, G2212, or 993X0) may be appended consultation codes if the requirements have been met.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CPT code 99241 may be reported in an office or outpatient setting for a patient with self-limited or minor problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CPT code 99241 will be deleted.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CPT code 99251 may be reported in an inpatient setting for a patient with self-limited or minor problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CPT code 99251 will be deleted.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inpatient and observation consultation services are two separate sets of CPT codes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inpatient and observation consultation services have been combined into one code set.