

Our Commitment to Compliance

Northwell Health Laboratories are committed to following ethical business practices and to complying with all relevant laws and regulations. Additional information including information on the Code of Ethical Conduct can be found on the Northwell Corporate Compliance site.

Advance Beneficiary Notice

Medicare does not pay for all tests and services all the time. Medicare will only pay for covered items and services when the Medicare rules are met. The fact that Medicare may not pay for a particular test or service does not mean that a physician cannot order the test. The test or service may be ordered and performed but the patient may be required to pay for the test or service and/or submit to a secondary insurance, if appropriate.

Northwell Health Laboratories will not bill a Medicare patient for tests that Medicare determines to be medically unnecessary unless the patient has been informed, in writing and prior to testing, that there is likelihood that Medicare will deny payment. An advance beneficiary notice (ABN) is used for this purpose. The ABN is sometimes referred to as a “patient waiver of liability” or simply a “waiver.”

Billing

In order for inpatient cases and outpatient laboratory services to bill, the patient’s medical record is reviewed by Northwell Health Laboratories coding staff to ensure that the documentation supporting all claims is complete accurate and reflects reasonable and necessary services, and the proper diagnosis and procedure codes are added to the patient’s account.

HIPAA and the Confidentiality of Patients Records

Northwell Health Laboratories is committed to protecting the privacy, security and confidentiality of patient information.

To ensure compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Privacy Act of 1996 (HIPAA), Northwell Health Laboratories has adopted policies regarding the release of patient information, including laboratory test results and surgical pathology reports. Information can be found on the Northwell Corporate Compliance site. The Notice of Privacy Practices can also be found.

Medical Necessity

Northwell Health Laboratories will not perform tests without appropriate written authorization and performs only those tests that are ordered by a physician or other authorized licensed individual. The laboratory will bill only those tests ordered and performed. If after the initial request is received additional testing is needed, the add-on testing must be ordered in writing.

- Medicare will only pay for tests that meet Medicare coverage criteria and are necessary to treat or diagnose the patient. Section 1862(a)(1)(A) of the Medicare Law states “no payment may be made under Part A or Part B for any expenses incurred for items or

services which are not reasonable or necessary for the diagnosis or treatment of an illness or injury or to improve the functioning of a malformed body member.”

- Medicare may not pay for a test that a physician deems appropriate if it does not meet Medicare coverage criteria or if documentation in the patient’s medical record does not substantiate the medical necessity of the test. Hence all diagnoses and/or ICD-10 codes submitted must be reflected in the patient’s medical record.

Professional Courtesy

Federal and State regulations prohibit offering “professional courtesy” testing; therefore, we cannot honor these requests.