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Comments and Responses Regarding Draft Local Coverage Determination: Polysomnography and Sleep Studies

As an important part of Medicare Local Coverage Determination (LCD) development, National Government Services solicits comments from the provider community and from members of the public who may be affected by or interested in our LCDs. The purpose of the advice and comment process is to gain the expertise and experience of those commenting.

We would like to thank those who suggested changes to the draft Polysomnography and Sleep Studies LCD. The official notice period for the final LCD begins on February 14, 2008, and the final determination will become effective on April 1, 2008.

Comment: Request that we approve uncontrolled hypertension for sleep study. As per article in the December 2001 Journal of Hypertension, by Alexander Logan titled "High Prevalence of Sleep Apnea in Drug Resistant Hypertension." Drug resistant hypertension is defined as a BP of greater than or equal to 140/90 while taking a sensible combination of 3 antihypertensive medications.

Response: Although we agree that sleep apnea may play a role in the pathogenesis of drug resistant hypertension, the medical necessity for polysomnography in patients with drug resistant hypertension must still be determined by a history of sleep disorder, and not simply by the diagnosis of hypertension itself. Therefore we will not be adding this diagnosis to the LCD.

Comment: The last edition of Braunwald, 7th ed. Electronic version - supports study for sleep apnea in selected cases in setting of CHF/Cardiomyopathy characterized by Cheyne-Stokes respiration.

Response: We agree that Cheyne-Stokes may cause sleep apnea and is an indication for polysomnography. We will add this diagnosis code (786.04) to the LCD.

As a continuing part of the LCD development process, we welcome additional comments, supported by scientific literature, to request further reconsideration of this LCD.