



## QUICK REFERENCE INFORMATION: The ABCs of Providing the Annual Wellness Visit (AWV)

**Please note:** The information in this publication applies only to the Medicare Fee-For-Service Program (also known as Original Medicare).

Medicare covers an Annual Wellness Visit (AWV) providing Personalized Prevention Plan Services (PPPS). Medicare covers the AWV for beneficiaries who are not within the first 12 months of their first Part B coverage period and have not received an Initial Preventive Physical Examination (IPPE) or AWV within the past 12 months. You must provide, or provide and refer, all components of the AWV prior to submitting a claim for the AWV. This document is divided into two sections: the first explains the components included in the first AWV a beneficiary receives; and the second explains the components included in all subsequent AWVs. Please note, the AWV is a separate service from the IPPE, also known as the “Welcome to Medicare Preventive Visit.”

The AWV includes a Health Risk Assessment (HRA). We included a brief summary of the minimum elements in the HRA. Additionally, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published “A Framework for Patient-Centered Health Risk Assessments: Providing Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Services to Medicare Beneficiaries.” This framework includes sections about the history of HRAs, definition of the HRA framework and rationale for its use, HRA use and follow-up interventions that evidence suggests can influence health behaviors, and a suggested set of HRA questions. For more information about HRAs, refer to <http://www.cdc.gov/policy/ohsc/HRA/FrameworkForHRA.pdf> on the CDC website.

### Components of the FIRST AWV Providing PPPS: Acquire Beneficiary History

Acquire Beneficiary History	Elements
<input type="checkbox"/> Health Risk Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Collects self-reported information the beneficiary knows;</li> <li>▪ You or the beneficiary can administer the health risk assessment before, or as part of, the AWV encounter;</li> <li>▪ Takes into account the communication needs of underserved populations, persons with limited English proficiency, and persons with health literacy needs, and is appropriately tailored to their needs;</li> <li>▪ Takes no more than 20 minutes to complete; and</li> <li>▪ At a minimum, addresses the following topics:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demographic data;</li> <li>• Self-assessment of health status;</li> <li>• Psychosocial risks;</li> <li>• Behavioral risks;</li> <li>• Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) including but not limited to: dressing, bathing, and walking; and</li> <li>• Instrumental ADLs including but not limited to: shopping, housekeeping, and handling finances.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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### Components of the FIRST AWV Providing PPS: Acquire Beneficiary History (cont.)

Acquire Beneficiary History	Elements
<input type="checkbox"/> Establishment of the beneficiary's medical/family history	At a minimum, collect and document the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Medical events in the beneficiary's parents and any siblings and children, including diseases that may be hereditary or place the beneficiary at increased risk;</li> <li>▪ Past medical and surgical history, including experiences with illnesses, hospital stays, operations, allergies, injuries, and treatments; and</li> <li>▪ Use of or exposure to medications and supplements, including calcium and vitamins.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> Review of the beneficiary's potential risk factors for depression, including current or past experiences with depression or other mood disorders	Use any appropriate screening instrument for beneficiaries without a current diagnosis of depression, which you may select from various available standardized screening tests designed for this purpose and recognized by national professional medical organizations.
<input type="checkbox"/> Review of the beneficiary's functional ability and level of safety	Use direct observation of the beneficiary, or any appropriate screening questions or a screening questionnaire, which you may select from various available screening questions or standardized questionnaires designed for this purpose and recognized by national professional medical organizations to assess, at a minimum, the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ability to successfully perform ADLs;</li> <li>▪ Fall risk;</li> <li>▪ Hearing impairment; and</li> <li>▪ Home safety.</li> </ul>

### Components of the FIRST AWV Providing PPS: Begin Assessment

Begin Assessment	Elements
<input type="checkbox"/> An assessment	Obtain the following measurements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Height, weight, body mass index (or waist circumference, if appropriate), and blood pressure; and</li> <li>▪ Other routine measurements as deemed appropriate, based on medical and family history.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> Establishment of a list of current providers and suppliers	Include current providers and suppliers that are regularly involved in providing medical care to the beneficiary.
<input type="checkbox"/> Detection of any cognitive impairment that the beneficiary may have	Assess the beneficiary's cognitive function by direct observation, with due consideration of information obtained by way of patient reports and concerns raised by family members, friends, caretakers, or others.

### Components of the FIRST AWV Providing PPS: Counsel Beneficiary

Counsel Beneficiary	Elements
<input type="checkbox"/> Establishment of a written screening schedule for the beneficiary, such as a checklist for the next 5 to 10 years, as appropriate	Base written screening schedule on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Age-appropriate preventive services Medicare covers;</li> <li>▪ Recommendations from the United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP); and</li> <li>▪ The beneficiary's health status and screening history.</li> </ul>

**Components of the FIRST AWV Providing PPPS: Counsel Beneficiary (cont.)**

Counsel Beneficiary	Elements
<input type="checkbox"/> Establishment of a list of risk factors and conditions for which the primary, secondary, or tertiary interventions are recommended or underway for the beneficiary	Include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Any mental health conditions or any such risk factors or conditions identified as a result of an IPPE; and</li> <li>▪ A list of treatment options and their associated risks and benefits.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> Furnishing of personalized health advice to the beneficiary and a referral, as appropriate, to health education or preventive counseling services	Includes referrals to programs aimed at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community-based lifestyle interventions to reduce health risks and promote self-management and wellness;</li> <li>▪ Fall prevention;</li> <li>▪ Nutrition;</li> <li>▪ Physical activity;</li> <li>▪ Tobacco-use cessation; and</li> <li>▪ Weight loss.</li> </ul>

**Components of SUBSEQUENT AWVs Providing PPPS: Acquire Update of Beneficiary History**

Acquire Update of Beneficiary History	Elements
<input type="checkbox"/> Update of health risk assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Collects self-reported information the beneficiary knows;</li> <li>▪ You or the beneficiary can administer the update of health risk assessment before, or as part of, the AWV encounter;</li> <li>▪ Takes no more than 20 minutes to complete; and</li> <li>▪ At a minimum, addresses the following topics:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demographic data;</li> <li>• Self-assessment of health status;</li> <li>• Psychosocial risks;</li> <li>• Behavioral risks;</li> <li>• ADLs, including but not limited to dressing, bathing, and physical ambulation; and</li> <li>• Instrumental ADLs, including but not limited to shopping, housekeeping, managing own medications, and handling finances.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> An update of the beneficiary's medical/family history	At a minimum, update and document the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Medical events in the beneficiary's parents and any siblings and children, including diseases that may be hereditary or place the beneficiary at increased risk;</li> <li>▪ Past medical and surgical history, including experiences with illnesses, hospital stays, operations, allergies, injuries, and treatments; and</li> <li>▪ Use of or exposure to medications and supplements, including calcium and vitamins.</li> </ul>

### Components of SUBSEQUENT AWVs Providing PPPS: Begin Assessment

Begin Assessment	Elements
<input type="checkbox"/> An assessment	Obtain the following measurements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Weight (or waist circumference, if appropriate) and blood pressure; and</li> <li>▪ Other routine measurements as deemed appropriate, based on medical and family history.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> An update of the list of current providers and suppliers, as that list was developed for the first AWV providing PPPS or previous subsequent AWV providing PPPS	Include current providers and suppliers that are regularly involved in providing medical care to the beneficiary.
<input type="checkbox"/> Detection of any cognitive impairment that the beneficiary may have	Assess the beneficiary's cognitive function by direct observation, with due consideration of information obtained by way of patient reports and concerns raised by family members, friends, caretakers, or others.

### Components of SUBSEQUENT AWVs Providing PPPS: Counsel Beneficiary

Counsel Beneficiary	Elements
<input type="checkbox"/> Update of the written screening schedule for the beneficiary, as that schedule was developed at the first AWV providing PPPS or previous subsequent AWV providing PPPS	Base written screening schedule on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Age-appropriate preventive services Medicare covers;</li> <li>▪ Recommendations from the USPSTF and the ACIP; and</li> <li>▪ The beneficiary's health status and screening history.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> Update of the list of risk factors and conditions for which the primary, secondary, or tertiary interventions are recommended or underway for the beneficiary, as that list was developed at the first AWV providing PPPS or previous subsequent AWV providing PPPS	Include any such risk factors or conditions identified.
<input type="checkbox"/> Furnishing of personalized health advice to the beneficiary and a referral, as appropriate to health education or preventive counseling services or programs	Includes referrals to programs aimed at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community-based lifestyle interventions to reduce health risks and promote self-management and wellness;</li> <li>▪ Fall prevention;</li> <li>▪ Nutrition;</li> <li>▪ Physical activity;</li> <li>▪ Tobacco-use cessation; and</li> <li>▪ Weight loss.</li> </ul>

## Other Medicare Part B Preventive Services

- Bone Mass Measurements
- Cardiovascular Disease Screening Blood Tests
- Colorectal Cancer Screening
- Counseling to Prevent Tobacco Use for Asymptomatic Patients
- Diabetes Screening Tests
- Diabetes Self-Management Training (DSMT)
- Glaucoma Screening
- Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Screening
- Influenza, Pneumococcal, and Hepatitis B Vaccinations and their Administration
- Intensive Behavioral Therapy (IBT) for Cardiovascular Disease (CVD), also referred to as a CVD risk reduction visit
- IBT for Obesity
- Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT)
- Prostate Cancer Screening
- Screening and Behavioral Counseling Interventions in Primary Care to Reduce Alcohol Misuse
- Screening for Depression in Adults
- Screening Mammography
- Screening Pap Tests and Pelvic Examination
- Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) Screening and High Intensity Behavioral Counseling (HIBC) to Prevent STIs
- Ultrasound Screening for Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA)

**NOTE:** Eligible beneficiaries must receive a referral for an ultrasound screening for AAA from their physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or clinical nurse specialist.

For additional information on Medicare preventive services, visit <http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/PreventiveServices.html> or refer to [http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/Downloads/MLNProducts\\_list\\_serv.pdf](http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/Downloads/MLNProducts_list_serv.pdf) on the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) website.

## Coding

Use the following Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) codes, listed in the table below, when filing claims for the AWW.

### AWW HCPCS Codes and Descriptors

AWW HCPCS Codes	Billing Code Descriptors
G0438	Annual wellness visit; includes a personalized prevention plan of service (PPPS), initial visit
G0439	Annual wellness visit, includes a personalized prevention plan of service (PPPS), subsequent visit

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### Who may perform the AWW?

A health professional, meaning a physician (a doctor of medicine or osteopathy), a qualified non-physician practitioner (a physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or certified clinical nurse specialist), or a medical professional (including a health educator, registered dietitian, nutrition professional, or other licensed practitioner), or a team of such medical professionals who are working under the direct supervision of a physician, must furnish the AWW.

### Who Can Get the AWW?

Medicare covers an AWW for all beneficiaries who are no longer within 12 months after the effective date of their first Medicare Part B coverage period and who have not gotten either an IPPE or an AWW providing PPPS within the past 12 months (that is, at least 11 months have passed following the month in which the IPPE or the last AWW was performed). Medicare pays for only one **first** AWW per beneficiary per lifetime, and pays for one **subsequent** AWW per year thereafter.

### **Are Physician Assistants and Nurse Practitioners subject to the incident-to rules for the AWW or will they be reimbursed at the full payment rate?**

No. The AWW has its own benefit category. Therefore, it does not fall under the incident-to benefit category under section 1861(s)(2)(A) of the Social Security Act.

### **Is the AWW the same as a beneficiary's yearly physical?**

No, the AWW is a preventive wellness visit and is not a "routine physical checkup" that some seniors may get every year or 2 from their physician or other qualified non-physician practitioner. Medicare does not cover routine physical examinations.

### **Are clinical laboratory tests part of the AWW?**

No, the AWW does not include any clinical laboratory tests, but you may make referrals for such tests as part of the AWW, if appropriate.

### **Do deductible or coinsurance/copayment apply for the AWW?**

No, Medicare waives both the coinsurance or copayment and the Medicare Part B deductible for the AWW.

### **Can I bill a separate Evaluation and Management (E/M) service at the same visit as the AWW?**

Medicare may pay for a significant, separately identifiable, medically necessary E/M service (Current Procedural Terminology [CPT] codes 99201 – 99215) you bill at the same visit as the AWW with modifier -25. That portion of the visit must be medically necessary to treat the beneficiary's illness or injury, or to improve the functioning of a malformed body member.

### **Which diagnosis code should I use for the AWW?**

You must report a diagnosis code. Since CMS does not require a specific diagnosis code for the AWW, you may choose any appropriate diagnosis code.

### **Can I bill an electrocardiogram (EKG) and the AWW on the same date of service?**

Generally, you may provide other medically necessary services on the same date of service as an AWW. The deductible and coinsurance/copayment apply for these other medically necessary services.

### **How do I know if a beneficiary already got his/her first AWW from another provider and know whether to bill for a subsequent AWW even though this is the first AWW I provided to this beneficiary?**

You have different options for accessing AWW eligibility information depending on the jurisdiction in which you practice. You may be able to access the information through the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Eligibility Transaction System (HETS), as well as HETS User Interface, through the provider call center Interactive Voice Responses (IVRs). CMS suggests that providers check with their MAC to see what options are available to check beneficiary eligibility.

### **If a beneficiary has never had an IPPE, does Medicare cover an Ultrasound Screening for AAA ordered based on an AWW referral?**

No, Medicare does not cover the ultrasound screening for AAA when ordered based on an AWW referral. Medicare coverage for a one-time ultrasound screening for AAA depends on the beneficiary meeting certain eligibility requirements, including getting a referral as a result of an IPPE.

## **Preparing Eligible Medicare Beneficiaries for the AWW**


Providers can help eligible Medicare beneficiaries get ready for their AWW by encouraging them to come prepared with the following information:

- Medical records, including immunization records;
- Family health history, in as much detail as possible;
- A full list of medications and supplements, including calcium and vitamins – how often and how much of each is taken; and
- A full list of current providers and suppliers involved in providing care.

## Resources

Resource	Website
CMS FAQs about the AWW	<a href="https://questions.cms.gov/faq.php?id=5005&amp;rtopic=1991&amp;rsubtopic=7749">https://questions.cms.gov/faq.php?id=5005&amp;rtopic=1991&amp;rsubtopic=7749</a>
“Medicare Benefit Policy Manual” – Publication 100-02	Chapter 15 <a href="http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Downloads/bp102c15.pdf">http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Downloads/bp102c15.pdf</a>
“Medicare Claims Processing Manual” – Publication 100-04	Chapter 12, Section 30.6.1.1 <a href="http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Downloads/clm104c12.pdf">http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Downloads/clm104c12.pdf</a> Chapter 18, Section 140 <a href="http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Downloads/clm104c18.pdf">http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Downloads/clm104c18.pdf</a>
Medicare Learning Network® (MLN) Guided Pathways (GPs)	The MLN GPs help providers gain knowledge on resources and products related to Medicare and the CMS website. For more information about preventive services, refer to the “Coverage of Preventive Services” section in the “MLN Guided Pathways: Basic Medicare Resources for Health Care Professionals, Suppliers, and Providers” booklet at <a href="http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNEdWebGuide/Downloads/Guided_Pathways_Basic_Booklet.pdf">http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNEdWebGuide/Downloads/Guided_Pathways_Basic_Booklet.pdf</a> on the CMS website. For all other GPs, visit <a href="http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNEdWebGuide/Guided_Pathways.html">http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNEdWebGuide/Guided_Pathways.html</a> on the CMS website.
MLN Matters® Article MM7079, “Annual Wellness Visit (AWV), Including Personalized Prevention Plan Services (PPPS)”	<a href="http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/Downloads/MM7079.pdf">http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/Downloads/MM7079.pdf</a>
MLN Matters® Article SE0711, “Reminder – Medicare Now Provides Coverage for Eligible Medicare Beneficiaries of a One-Time Ultrasound Screening for Abdominal Aortic Aneurysms (AAA) When Referred for this Screening as a Result of the Initial Preventive Physical Examination (“Welcome to Medicare” Physical Exam)”	<a href="http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/Downloads/SE0711.pdf">http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/Downloads/SE0711.pdf</a>
MLN Matters® Article SE1338, “Improve Your Patients’ Health with the Initial Preventive Physical Examination (IPPE) and Annual Wellness Visit (AWV)”	<a href="http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/Downloads/SE1338.pdf">http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/Downloads/SE1338.pdf</a>
Preventive Services Educational Products	<a href="http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/Downloads/education_products_prevserv.pdf">http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/Downloads/education_products_prevserv.pdf</a>

## Resources (cont.)

Resource	Website
Preventive Services MLN Web Page	<a href="http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/PreventiveServices.html">http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/PreventiveServices.html</a> or scan the Quick Response (QR) code on the right. 
“Providing the Annual Wellness Visit” Booklet	<a href="http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/Downloads/AnnualWellnessVisit-ICN907786.pdf">http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/Downloads/AnnualWellnessVisit-ICN907786.pdf</a>
“Resources for Medicare Beneficiaries” Fact Sheet	<a href="http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/Downloads/BenePubFS-ICN905183.pdf">http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/Downloads/BenePubFS-ICN905183.pdf</a>



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