

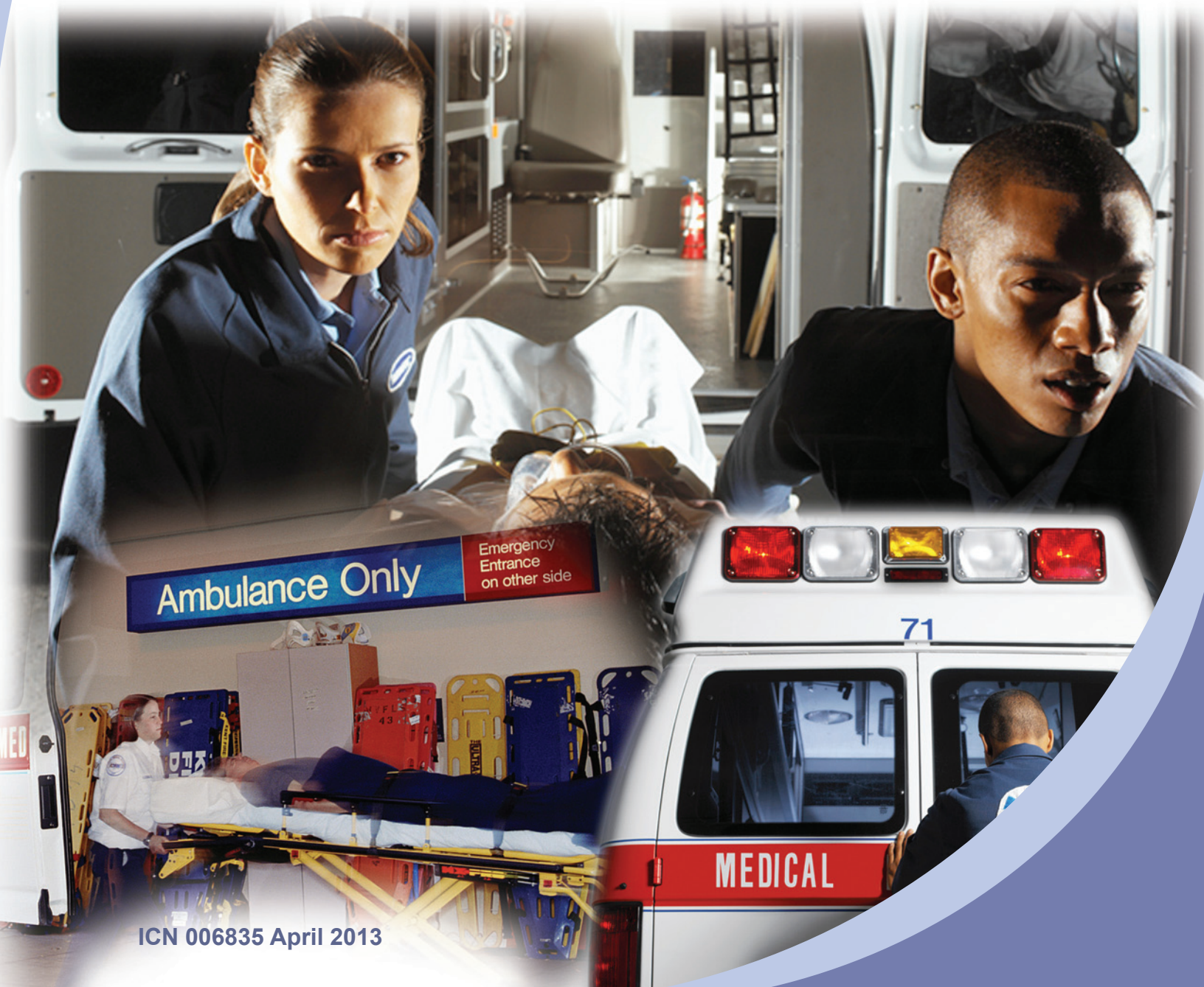
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services



Official Information Health Care
Professionals Can Trust

Ambulance Fee Schedule

PAYMENT SYSTEM FACT SHEET SERIES



Ambulance Only

Emergency
Entrance
on other side



amount as payment in full for your transports. In addition, you may bill or collect only any unmet Part B deductible and coinsurance amounts from the beneficiary.

Ambulance Providers and Suppliers

The Ambulance FS applies to the following providers and suppliers:

- ❖ Volunteer;
- ❖ Municipal;
- ❖ Private;
- ❖ Independent; and
- ❖ Institutional (that is, hospitals, Critical Access Hospitals [CAH] with the exception of CAHs that are the only ambulance service within 35 miles, and Skilled Nursing Facilities).

Payments

Payment for ambulance transports under the Ambulance FS:

- ❖ Includes a base rate payment (level of service provided) plus a separate payment for mileage to the nearest appropriate facility;
- ❖ Covers both the transport of the beneficiary to the nearest appropriate facility and all medically necessary covered items and services (for example, oxygen, drugs, extra attendants, and electrocardiogram testing) associated with the transport; and
- ❖ Precludes a separate payment for items and services furnished under the ambulance benefit.

This publication provides the following information about the Ambulance Fee Schedule (FS):

- ❖ Background;
- ❖ Ambulance providers and suppliers;
- ❖ Payments;
- ❖ How payment rates are set; and
- ❖ Resources.

When “you” is used in this publication, we are referring to ambulance providers and suppliers.

Background

Section 4531(b)(2) of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 added Section 1834(l) to the Social Security Act (the Act), which mandated the implementation of a national Ambulance FS effective for Medicare Part B ambulance transport claims with dates of service on or after April 1, 2002. The Ambulance FS applies to all ambulance transports.

Section 1834(l) of the Act also required mandatory assignment for all ambulance transports, which means that you will be paid the Medicare allowed



How Payment Rates Are Set

Effective January 1, 2006, the Ambulance FS was fully implemented. Each year, an update is applied to the payment limits for ambulance transports that is equal to the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the 12-month period ending with June of the previous year. Under the Affordable Care Act, Section 1834(l)(3)(B) of the Act was amended to apply a productivity adjustment to the update equal to the 10-year moving average of changes in economy-wide private nonfarm business multi-factor productivity (MFP) beginning on January 1, 2011. The resulting update percentage is called the Ambulance Inflation Factor (AIF). For calendar year (CY) 2013, the MFP is 0.90 percent and the CPI-U is 1.70 percent. Under the Affordable Care Act, the CPI-U is reduced by the MFP, even if the reduction results in a negative AIF. Therefore, the AIF for CY 2013 is 0.80 percent.

Ground Ambulance Transports

Effective January 1, 2006, the total payment amount for ground ambulance providers and suppliers is based on 100 percent of the national Ambulance FS. Payments for ground ambulance transports under the Ambulance FS include the following elements:

- ❖ A nationally uniform base rate or conversion factor for all ground ambulance transports;

- ❖ A numeric value for ambulance transports relative to the value of a base level ambulance transport called a relative value unit is assigned to each type of ground ambulance transport;
- ❖ A geographic adjustment factor (GAF) for each Ambulance FS locality area (geographic practice cost index [GPCI]);
- ❖ A nationally uniform loaded mileage rate;
- ❖ An additional amount for certain mileage for a rural point-of-pickup (POP); and
- ❖ Additional payments for certain specified temporary periods.

Air Ambulance Transports

Effective January 1, 2006, the total payment amount for air ambulance providers and suppliers is based on 100 percent of the national Ambulance FS. Payments for air ambulance transports under the Ambulance FS include the following elements:

- ❖ A nationally uniform base rate for fixed wing and a nationally uniform base rate for rotary wing;
- ❖ A GAF for each Ambulance FS locality area (GPCI);
- ❖ A nationally uniform loaded mileage rate for each type of air transport; and
- ❖ A rural adjustment to the base rate and mileage for transports furnished for a rural POP.



Resources

The chart below provides Ambulance FS resource information.

Ambulance Fee Schedule Resources

For More Information About...	Resource
Ambulance Fee Schedule	<p>http://www.cms.gov/Center/Provider-Type/Ambulances-Services-Center.html on the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) website</p> <p>http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Payment/AmbulanceFeeSchedule on the CMS website</p> <p>Chapter 10 of the “Medicare Benefit Policy Manual” (Publication 100-02) located at http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Downloads/bp102c10.pdf on the CMS website</p> <p>Chapter 15 of the “Medicare Claims Processing Manual” (Publication 100-04) located at http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Downloads/clm104c15.pdf on the CMS website</p>
All Available Medicare Learning Network® (MLN) Products	<p>“Medicare Learning Network® Catalog of Products” located at http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/Downloads/MLNCatalog.pdf on the CMS website or scan the Quick Response (QR) code on the right with your mobile device</p> 
Provider-Specific Medicare Information	<p>MLN publication titled “MLN Guided Pathways to Medicare Resources Provider Specific Curriculum for Health Care Professionals, Suppliers, and Providers” booklet located at http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNEdWebGuide/Downloads/Guided_Pathways_Provider_Specific_Booklet.pdf on the CMS website</p>
Medicare Information for Beneficiaries	<p>http://www.medicare.gov on the CMS website</p>



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