

March 3, 2005

**DOCUMENTATION OF KINESIOTHERAPY SERVICES IN DEPARTMENT OF  
VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA) NURSING HOME CARE UNITS**

**1. PURPOSE:** This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive establishes policy for the documentation of Kinesiotherapy (KT) services, including applicable treatment time and procedures in the Minimum Data Set (MDS) within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Nursing Home Care Units (NHCUs).

**2. BACKGROUND**

a. KT is the treatment of the effects of disease, injury, and congenital disorders by the use of therapeutic exercise and education. Kinesiotherapists, formerly Corrective Therapists, have been an integral part of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R) services provided within VA and its long-term care settings for over 50 years. Since implementation of the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) MDS within VA NHCUs, MDS documentation for therapeutic services provided by kinesiotherapists has been restricted to Section "S" of the MDS. Therapeutic services recorded in Section "S" do not contribute to the determination of the Resources Utilization Group (RUG) classification and thus, documentation of all KT services in this section may result in the appearance of a lower-level of rehabilitation intensity that was actually provided.

b. The MDS does not include provisions for recording KT time and procedures when provided within the context of defined rehabilitation services that are time limited and goal directed in Sections "P" and "T." These sections contribute directly to the RUG classifications and intensity of services for rehabilitation RUGs. Disciplines currently authorized to record in these sections of the MDS include:

- (1) Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Services,
- (2) Occupational Therapy (OT),
- (3) Physical Therapy (PT),
- (4) Respiratory Therapy, and

(5) Psychological therapy (by any licensed mental health professional) when their services are ordered within the context of a rehabilitation regimen. *NOTE: Routine services outside the context of an ordered rehabilitation regimen are not entered in this section by the preceding disciplines. For example, routine respiratory therapy treatments are not entered in these sections.*

c. KT services within VA NHCUs are provided within at least three treatment programs:

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- (1) Short-term, goal oriented, rehabilitative care programs;
- (2) Formal restorative nursing programs as defined by the CMS and published in the MDS User's Guide; and
- (3) Other long term maintenance services provided outside goal directed rehab programs or formal restorative nursing programs.

d. A special VA PM&R Task Group consisting of representatives of all PM&R therapy disciplines recently reviewed therapeutic procedures commonly provided by kinesiotherapists, occupational therapists, and physical therapists within their respective discipline's standards of practice in long-term care settings. Select procedures appropriate to care in the long-term care setting within the standard of practice for kinesiotherapy were identified. Work of the Task Group was assigned as part of a PM&R and Geriatric and Extended Care (GEC) Collaborative project to address rehabilitation care delivery in long-term care settings.

**3. POLICY:** It is VHA policy that KT treatment time and services provided within VA NHCUs must be documented in the MDS.

**4. ACTION:** Each Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) Director is responsible for ensuring that:

a. VA NHCUs document in MDS KT treatment time involved in the following procedures, common to both KT and PT, and record such time in Section P1b, item c, Section P3, Section T1b, items c or d, and Section T2 when the ordered therapies fall within the scope defined in this document. All other routine KT activities that are not specifically within the context of a defined rehabilitation program or formal restorative nursing program continue to be recorded in Section S of the MDS. The applicable procedures are defined by the American Medical Association Current Procedural Technology (CPT) codes. Physical modalities are not included within the following procedures allowable for KT, and patients requiring such modalities must be provided by a physical therapist or by a PT assistant under the direction of a physical therapist. *NOTE: Some states may allow occupational therapists or OT assistants under the direction of an occupational therapist to provide certain physical modalities.*

| <b>CPT Procedure Name</b>                 | <b>CPT Synonym</b>               |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Limb Muscle Testing, Manual               | Limb Muscle Testing, Manual      |
| Range of Motion Measurements              | ROM Measurements, Each Extremity |
| Therapeutic Exercises                     | Therapeutic Procedure 1-1        |
| Neuromuscular Re-education                | Neuromuscular Re-education       |
| Aquatic Therapy with Therapeutic Exercise | Aquatic Therapy                  |
| Gait Training Therapy                     | Gait Training                    |
| Group Therapeutic Procedures              | Group Therapeutic Procedures     |

| CPT Procedure Name  | CPT Synonym   |
|---|---|
| Orthotic Training   | Orthotic Training   |
| Therapeutic Activities  | Therapeutic Activities  |
| Self-care Management Training   | Self-care and/or Home Management (15)   |
| Community and/or Work Reintegration   | Driver Training (only)  |
| Wheelchair Management and/or Propulsion Training                                  | Wheelchair Management   |
| Physical Performance Test   | Issue Canes, Crutches, and/or Walkers   |
|   |   |
| Physical Performance Test   | Physical Performance Test   |
| Home Visit for Assistance with Activities of Daily Living (ADL) and Personal Care | Home Visit  |
| Patient Education   | Patient Education, not otherwise specified, Non-physician provider, individual, per session |
| Patient Education   | Patient Education, not otherwise specified, Non-physician provider, group, per session      |
| Patient Education   | Weight management classes, Non-physician provider, per session                              |
| Patient Education   | Exercise classes, Non-physician provider, per session                                       |
| Patient Education   | Nutrition classes, Non-physician provider, per session                                      |
| Patient Education   | Smoking Cessation classes, Non-physician, per session                                       |
| Patient Education   | Stress Management classes, Non-Physician, per session                                       |
| Patient Education   | Diabetic Management classes, Non-Physician, per session                                     |
| Patient Education   | Cardiac rehabilitation program, Non-Physician, per session                                  |

**NOTE:** A complete list of these procedures, including the CPT code numbers, is available at: [http://vaww1.va.gov/health/him/VA\\_HIM\\_T/coding\\_council1.htm](http://vaww1.va.gov/health/him/VA_HIM_T/coding_council1.htm)

b. KT services to patients participating in an individualized short-term, goal-orientated rehabilitation program are recorded within Section P1b, item c, Section P3, and Section T1b, items c or d, and Section T2 when applicable in the MDS.

c. KT services to patients participating in a formal restorative nursing program are recorded in Section P3 in the MDS.

d. All remaining KT services provided are recorded in Section S in the MDS.

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**5. REFERENCES**

- a. Public Law 106-117 (Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefits Act)
- b. AMA Current Procedural Terminology Code Manual 2004
- c. Handbook for Coding Guidelines, Version 4, February 2004

**6. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES:** The Director, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, (117) and the Chief, Nursing Home Care, Geriatrics and Extended Care Strategic Health Care Group, are responsible for the contents of this Directive. Questions may be directed to 202-273-8484.

**7. RESCISSIONS:** None. This VHA Directive expires March 31, 2010.

S/Jonathan B. Perlin, MD, PhD, MSHA, FACP  
Acting Under Secretary for Health

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