



CMS to Begin Malnutrition Review as Requested by the Office of Inspector General

In July 2020, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) under the Department of Health and Human Services released a [report](#) of findings from audits to determine hospital compliance with Medicare billing requirements when assigning severe malnutrition diagnosis codes. In that report, the OIG recommended the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) attempt to recover overpayments.

In June of this year, multiorganizational task force members representing ASPEN, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (Academy), the Association of Clinical Documentation Integrity Specialists (ACDIS) and the American Society for Nutrition participated in a “listening session” to educate members of the CMS-Compliance Provider Division and the Supplemental Medical Review Contractor (SMRC) on appropriate methods for diagnosing malnutrition highlighting avoidance of outdated methods such as the use of visceral proteins and body mass index.

ASPEN/Academy/ACDIS leaders have recently learned the SMRC will soon begin conducting the supplemental audit. Per CMS, the reviewers initially will look at a small sample of claims. CMS suggests that for those facilities that undergo an audit, upon receipt of the review results letter, providers can request a discussion and education (D&E) session with the SMRC. During this D&E session, providers can discuss the claim review findings and can also submit additional documentation to have claims re-reviewed. The information below outlines contact information for the SMRC, Noridian:

Website: <https://www.noridiansmrc.com/>
Contact Center: 1- 833-860-4133 (M-F 7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. CT)
Customer Service Email: SMRCMail@Noridian.com

The task force intends to reach out to Noridian for further discussion on the upcoming review; additional information, as identified, will be shared with members. If your facility undergoes an audit during this supplemental review, the task force would like to learn about your experience. If you can share information pertaining to an audit, please contact Marsha Schofield, Senior Director Governance/Nutrition Services Coverage, at mschofield@eatright.org. Thank you.