

Rehabilitation

1. MCG Criteria Used

Clinical Criteria: MCG Care Guidelines, 30th Edition

- Cardiac Rehabilitation (MCG ORG: A-0358 AC, 30th Edition)
- Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility (Acute Rehabilitation): Stroke (MCG ORG: RFC, 30th Edition)
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome: Referral Management (MCG ORG: R-0048 AC, 30th Edition)

Applicable CPT / HCPCS Codes:

CPT / HCPCS Code	Description
93797, 93798	Physician or other qualified health care professional services for cardiac rehabilitation, with and without continuous ECG monitoring
G0422, G0423	Intensive cardiac rehabilitation, with or without continuous ECG monitoring, per session
97161-97168	Physical therapy and occupational therapy evaluation and re-evaluation of low, moderate, and high complexity
97110-97150	Therapeutic procedures including therapeutic exercise, neuromuscular re-education, gait training, and group therapy
92507, 92522, 92523	Speech, language, and swallowing treatment and evaluation
97112, 95992	Neuromuscular re-education and canalith repositioning for vestibular rehabilitation

2. Statement of Rationale

Akido Labs uses the criteria in MCG Care Guidelines (30th Edition) to supplement the general Medicare criteria regarding rehabilitation services, including outpatient cardiac rehabilitation, admission to an inpatient rehabilitation facility for acute stroke rehabilitation, and referral management for carpal tunnel syndrome, where Medicare coverage criteria are not fully established or require additional clinical specificity. MCG criteria are used to ensure consistency in reviewing the conditions to be met for coverage of rehabilitation services and to determine when such services are medically necessary. Rehabilitation services in the Medicare Advantage population are central to functional recovery after cardiac events, stroke, and musculoskeletal injury, but they vary widely in intensity and setting. The inpatient rehabilitation facility level of care in particular is resource-intensive and appropriate only for patients who can tolerate and benefit from an intensive multidisciplinary program. Absent consistent, evidence-based criteria, there is material risk of both inappropriate denial of medically necessary rehabilitation and inappropriate placement at a level of care that does not match the patient's needs.

Potential Clinical Harms:

Cardiac Rehabilitation: Inappropriate denial of outpatient cardiac rehabilitation after myocardial infarction, coronary revascularization, heart failure, or valve surgery could forgo a guideline-

recommended intervention that reduces cardiovascular mortality and hospital readmission, leaving the patient at elevated risk of recurrent events.

Inpatient Stroke Rehabilitation: Inappropriate denial of admission to an inpatient rehabilitation facility for a stroke patient who requires and can tolerate intensive multidisciplinary therapy could result in inadequate functional recovery and loss of independence. Conversely, inappropriate approval of the inpatient rehabilitation level of care for a patient who cannot tolerate intensive therapy or whose needs could be met at a lower level exposes the patient to an unnecessarily intensive program and diverts resources from appropriate care.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome: Inappropriate management of carpal tunnel syndrome, including premature surgical referral before a trial of conservative treatment or failure to refer a patient with severe or progressive nerve compromise, could lead either to unnecessary surgery or to preventable permanent nerve injury.

Clinical Benefits:

Cardiac Rehabilitation: MCG criteria specify validated indications for cardiac rehabilitation drawn from cardiovascular specialty society guidelines, including recent myocardial infarction, coronary revascularization, stable heart failure, and cardiac surgery. By tying enrollment to evidence-based qualifying events, these criteria directly mitigate the harm of forgoing a mortality- and readmission-reducing intervention identified above.

Inpatient Stroke Rehabilitation: MCG criteria require that the patient need and be able to tolerate an intensive multidisciplinary rehabilitation program, with active participation from multiple therapy disciplines and physician oversight, matching the inpatient rehabilitation facility level of care to patients who will benefit. This evidence-based selection directly counters both the harm of inadequate recovery from underplacement and the harm of unnecessarily intensive care from overplacement described above.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome: MCG referral management criteria reserve surgical referral for patients with confirmed diagnosis and either failure of conservative management or evidence of severe or progressive nerve compromise, directly addressing both the harm of unnecessary surgery and the harm of preventable permanent nerve injury. The clinical benefits of using MCG Care Guidelines are highly likely to outweigh any clinical harms, including delayed or decreased access to services, because the criteria incorporate thresholds drawn from current specialty society guidelines and are unlikely to lead to inappropriate denials.

3. Explanation of Supplementation

Basis for Use: Original Medicare clinical criteria are not fully established for all aspects of rehabilitation services and require supplementation to ensure consistent medical necessity determinations. While Medicare establishes coverage frameworks for cardiac rehabilitation and inpatient rehabilitation facility services, the specific clinical thresholds that distinguish appropriate from inappropriate enrollment, level-of-care placement, and surgical referral are not fully specified and benefit from evidence-based clinical criteria.

Applicable Medicare References: Social Security Act Section 1862(a)(1): 'Reasonable and necessary' standard Code of Federal Regulations: 42 CFR 410.49 (cardiac rehabilitation and intensive cardiac rehabilitation programs); 42 CFR 412.622 (inpatient rehabilitation facility classification and payment criteria) Medicare Benefit Policy Manual, Chapter 1: Inpatient Hospital Services, including inpatient rehabilitation facilities (CMS IOM Publication 100-02) Medicare Benefit Policy Manual, Chapter 15: Covered Medical and Other Health Services (CMS IOM Publication 100-02) Medicare Program Integrity Manual, Chapter 6, Section 6.5 (CMS IOM

Publication 100-08) Code of Federal Regulations: 42 CFR 422.101 Medicare Coverage Database: <https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/search.aspx> Within the above statutes and regulations, MCG criteria assist in determining the appropriateness of cardiac rehabilitation enrollment based on qualifying cardiac events; the appropriateness of the inpatient rehabilitation facility level of care based on the patient's need for and ability to tolerate intensive multidisciplinary therapy; and the appropriate management and surgical referral of carpal tunnel syndrome. Use of these criteria helps ensure rehabilitation services are not incorrectly denied when medically appropriate, nor incorrectly approved when not reasonable and necessary, and may decrease inappropriate denials by creating a consistent set of evidence-based review criteria.

4. Summary of Clinical Evidence

Note: The following evidence summary is derived directly from MCG Care Guidelines, 30th Edition (guidelines A-0358, the Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility Stroke RFC, and R-0048). The reference lists below are drawn from those respective MCG guidelines.

Background

Cardiac Rehabilitation (MCG ORG: A-0358 AC) Cardiac rehabilitation is a comprehensive, medically supervised outpatient program of exercise training, risk factor modification, education, and counseling for patients with qualifying cardiac conditions, including recent myocardial infarction, coronary revascularization, stable chronic heart failure, and cardiac valve surgery. It is a guideline-recommended intervention shown to reduce cardiovascular mortality and hospital readmission.

Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility, Stroke (MCG ORG: RFC) The inpatient rehabilitation facility level of care provides an intensive, coordinated, multidisciplinary rehabilitation program for patients recovering from acute stroke. Admission requires that the patient need active and ongoing intervention from multiple therapy disciplines, be able to participate in and benefit from an intensive program, and require physician supervision and the coordinated interdisciplinary resources of the facility.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, Referral Management (MCG ORG: R-0048 AC) Carpal tunnel syndrome is a compression neuropathy of the median nerve at the wrist. Referral management criteria guide the timing of specialist and surgical referral, reserving surgical referral for patients with a confirmed diagnosis and either failure of conservative management or evidence of severe or progressive nerve compromise such as thenar atrophy or denervation on electrodiagnostic testing.

Evidence Summary

Cardiac Rehabilitation (MCG ORG: A-0358 AC) This guideline (30th Edition) is supported by peer-reviewed articles and cardiovascular specialty society guidelines establishing the qualifying indications for cardiac rehabilitation and the evidence that participation reduces cardiovascular mortality and readmission.

Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility, Stroke (MCG ORG: RFC) This guideline (30th Edition) is supported by an extensive body of peer-reviewed literature, regulatory criteria, and rehabilitation specialty guidance establishing the requirements for the inpatient rehabilitation facility level of care, including the need for and ability to tolerate an intensive multidisciplinary program.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, Referral Management (MCG ORG: R-0048 AC) This guideline (30th Edition) is supported by peer-reviewed articles and specialty society guidance establishing the

diagnostic criteria for carpal tunnel syndrome and the indications for conservative management versus surgical referral.

Rationale (from MCG) Use of these MCG care guidelines helps the clinician identify patient-specific clinical factors that establish the medical necessity and appropriate setting of rehabilitation services. The evidence-based clinical criteria ensure patients receive the most appropriate level of rehabilitative care for their specific condition, reduce unnecessary risks and resource use, and provide a standard that can reduce disparities in care. These guidelines supplement but do not replace, modify, or supersede existing Medicare regulations or applicable NCDs or LCDs.

Related CMS Coverage Guidance (as cited in MCG 30th Edition): Code of Federal Regulations (CFR): 42 CFR 410.49; 42 CFR 412.622; 42 CFR 422.101; CMS IOM Publication 100-02, Medicare Benefit Policy Manual, Chapters 1 and 15; CMS IOM Publication 100-08, Medicare Program Integrity Manual, Chapter 6, Section 6.5; Medicare Coverage Database: <https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/search.aspx>

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