

Recertification of Terminal Illness PC.R10

Regulatory Citation(s): 42 CFR 418.22; 418.102(c)
L-Tag(s): 668

POLICY: After a patient completes the first 90-day hospice benefit period, the hospice Medical Director or physician member of the IDG signs a written statement for each subsequent benefit period, recertifying that the patient's prognosis is 6 months or less if the terminal illness follows its normal course.

PROCEDURE:

1. The continued eligibility of all patients is reviewed on an ongoing basis during IDG meetings. At any time that the IDG determines that there may be a question about patient eligibility, then a member of the hospice medical team (physician or nurse practitioner) will make a visit to the patient to validate eligibility.
2. Patients who enter their third or later benefit period are required to receive a face-to-face encounter from the hospice physician or the hospice nurse practitioner no more than thirty days prior to the start of the benefit period to be recertified.
3. The *Recertification of Terminal Illness* form includes:
 - a. a statement, above the physician's dated signature, that the patient's prognosis is for a life expectancy of 6 months or less if the terminal illness runs its normal course;
 - b. the dates of the benefit period to which the recertification applies;
 - c. a brief narrative statement, legibly written, by the recertifying physician describing the clinical factors that support the patient's continued eligibility for hospice (including findings from face-to-face encounters for the third and later benefit periods);
 - d. an attestation statement signed by the physician that the narrative was composed by him or her;
 - e. documented receipt of verbal recertification from the hospice physician if the signed recertification was not received within two days of the start of the new benefit period; and
 - f. the physician's signature and the date signed.
4. In addition to the above, recertification of patients entering **the** third or later benefit period must also include:
 - a. an attestation statement that a face-to-face encounter was provided by the recertifying hospice physician and the date it occurred; **OR**

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- b. an attestation statement that a nurse practitioner (employed by the hospice) or other hospice physician provided the face-to-face encounter, the date it occurred and that information from the face-to-face encounter was provided to the recertifying physician.
5. Clinical information and other documentation that supports the patient's medical prognosis and the physician's recertification of terminal illness are included in the patient's clinical record.
6. The hospice physician signs and dates the *Recertification of Terminal Illness* form no more than 15 calendar days prior to the start of the next benefit period.
7. The physician's name is legible (printed) under his/her dated signature.
8. If the hospice physician does not sign and date the *Recertification of Terminal Illness* form within two days of the start of the new benefit period (by the end of the third day), a verbal recertification is obtained from the hospice physician within the two days and is documented in the patient's clinical record.
9. The signed *Recertification of Terminal Illness* form is available in the patient's clinical record prior to submitting claims for payment.

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