The DME MACs have received a number of questions about certain accessories provided with wheeled walkers, especially the “rollator” style of walker (E0143).

Many “rollator” types of walkers are manufactured with a seat for the beneficiary to use when feeling tired or unstable. According to the PDAC (Pricing, Data Analysis and Coding) Contractor, suppliers may bill two codes for this walker: the E0143 (wheeled walker) and the E0156 (seat attachment).

The related Policy Article (A52503) for Walkers states that the E0143 (wheeled walker) is coded to include glide-type brakes or equivalent. This braking system uses a spring mechanism which causes the walker leg post to release when there is no downward pressure applied to the top of the walker frame. Instead of the glide-type brakes, many “rollator” walkers have a hand braking system that is similar in nature to that of brakes on a bicycle. This hand braking system is considered an enhancement accessory that does not contribute to the overall function of the walker. As such, suppliers may bill for this variable braking system using HCPCS code A9270.

Other enhancement accessories, such as a basket or special color combination, may also be billed using HCPCS A9270, which will result in a Patient Responsibility (PR) denial on that particular claim line.

For reference, here is the excerpt from the related Policy Article for Walkers:

An enhancement accessory is one which does not contribute significantly to the therapeutic function of the walker. It may include, but is not limited to style, color, hand operated brakes (other than those described in code E0147), or basket (or equivalent). Use code A9270 when an enhancement accessory of a walker is billed.

The following is an example of the HCPCS codes a supplier might bill the Medicare program for a rollator walker with basket and hand braking system:

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E0143NU
E0156NU
A9270 (with a narrative in the NTE segment indicating the hand brakes)
A9270 (with a narrative in the NTE segment indicating basket addition)
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When the claim is processed, the E0143 and the E0156 will be considered for coverage while the two A9270 claim lines will deny PR and the beneficiary will be responsible for payment.

Please note: the preceding information should NOT be used for the E0147 walker. Suppliers are encouraged to review the related Policy Article for Walkers noted above as well as coding verification for any E0147 on the PDAC’s website at www.dmepdac.com.