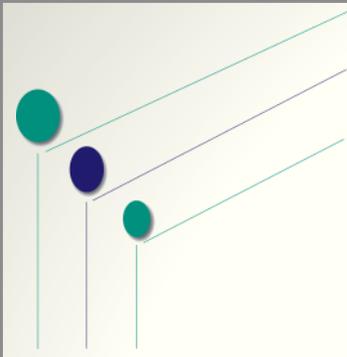




Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT): *Billing, Codes and Need*

Melissa Brito

Adelante Healthcare, Phoenix, AZ



Introduction

- Adelante Helathcare centers do not currently provide Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT).
- The WIC program will be hiring 2.5 Registered Dietitians (RD's) this coming Fall and there is an opportunity for Adelante to invest in an additional .5 salary for an RD to provide MNT services.
- However, there is a lack of understanding concerning RD's ability to bill for MNT and the guidelines involved.



Medical Nutrition Therapy

- During MNT sessions RDs serve as a guidance to clients in need of making lifestyle and nutritional changes to manage their disease and overall health and well-being.
- RDs provide a full nutritional assessment, interventions and monitoring of disease process.
- RDs can provide service for various conditions such as:
 - Diabetes
 - Renal Disease
 - Weight Management
 - Allergies
 - Cardiac cond. (HTN)
 - Eating Disorders
- ✧ Ultimately help in overall prevention of further complications



Methodology

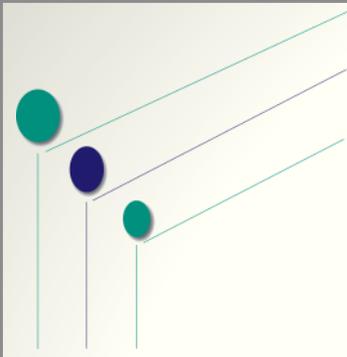
Data Collection and Difficulties

- Area Registered Dieticians (*referred by different sources*)
 - Some were difficult to reach/engage
 - Limited information due to lack of experience billing/resources
 - Worked in private settings/hospital
- Medical Insurance Companies
 - Disclose information when provided with client specific policies only, *lead to delayed data collection*
 - Information given verbally—limited & general
 - Departments trained to complete tasks-unable to provide proper information
- Internet
 - Search generated more information about Medicare coverage than any other medical health plan



Results

- MNT Services: With physician referral, an initial, follow-up and reassessment visits as necessary limited to three (3) hours in a 12-month period. Subsequent years are limited to two (2) hours with physician referral. Unused hours cannot be carried over to subsequent years. A new referral is needed yearly.
- Codes Found: 97802, 97803, 97804
- Medicare
 - National Medicare part B reimbursement for renal and diabetes diagnosis only when MNT referral made by the primary care physician.
- AHCCCS
 - Prior authorization required for MNT codes
 - HealthChoice AZ. United Healthcare Community Plan
- Private Insurance
 - Must meet medical necessity for patient's diagnosis and referred by physician
 - Humana: MNT for Diabetes only
 - BCBS: variety of conditions covered under MNT codes



Discussion

- MNT services is a billable encounter by an RD.
- While, the billing guidelines are not concrete for Medicaid, and the information varies for private health insurance policies, Medicare has very specific guidelines and abundant resources available for guidance on billing.
- Adelante's major revenue source for medical insurance billing is Medicare and Medicaid and favorably, the most precise and ample information provided for MNT coverage and specifications was for Medicare.



Recommendation

- An RD should be hired by Adelante Healthcare to provide MNT services. An RD can collaborate with patient's providers to supplement the treatment plan for patients in need.

Next Steps

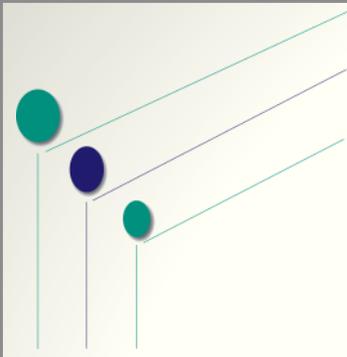
- Continue to research more specific coverage details for AHCCCS (Medicaid) and private insurance plans
- Obtain Adelante's outside MNT referral history
- Survey Adelante's providers on the need for MNT on site
- Investigate which sites require the most need
- ❖ **Analyzing the remaining information will provide a better understanding of return on investment for an RD at Adelante**



Conclusion

- MNT can significantly provide a better quality of life as patients learn the information and tools they need to manage their disease.
- Adelante can improve productivity within its healthcare centers.
- Patient will be more educated on their disease and will be more compliant with the treatment.
- MNT services will allow Adelante Helathcare to conform to their mission of maintaining the highest level of preventative and primary care services at an affordable cost for all.

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- I hope that the information I have gathered serves of great value to Adelante as they prepare to make a decision regarding hiring a part time RD.
 - My assistance might create a new job opportunity, but it can also positively impact the health of many of Adelante's current and future clients.
 - Talking to insurance companies and working with billing language at first felt very foreign. Not only did I learn more about MNT, but I also learned more about billing, billing codes, Medicare and communicating with insurance companies.
 - This project gave me a greater perspective of all the work involved in just one aspect of all the necessary preparations if an RD were to be hired.



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