Documentation for Lumbar Spinal Fusion Procedures

Medicare Contractors have cited missing or insufficient documentation such as a lack of specific documentation about conservative care before the surgical intervention as a primary reason for denial of Lumbar Spinal Fusion procedures. In some cases, this documentation may exist in the outpatient records of the surgeon, primary care physician or other practitioner.

The following examples, if clearly documented in the hospital medical record, may help support payment for spinal fusion-related hospital care/procedures:

- Previous unsuccessful conservative therapy (non-surgical medical management) such as PT, OT, injections, analgesia, and assistive devices
- Physical exam clearly documenting the progression/duration of any neurological deficits, upper or lower extremity strength, activity modification, and pain levels
- Interpretation and report for diagnostic tests (e.g. x-ray, MRI, CT)
- Medical clearance for procedure(s) (as applicable)
- Operative report (including approach and all components of the spine surgery)

For two-level or rare three-level planned procedures for Degenerative Disc Disease, the case-specific indications must be directly addressed in the pre-procedure record with clinical correlation to diagnostic testing results (such as disc-space narrowing, end plate changes, annular changes, etc.).

The physician should incorporate the required documentation in existing forms of communication such as the patient’s History and Physical and Progress Notes which are provided to the hospital.

To assist the physicians with the CMS documentation requirements, SPH has developed a form entitled “Lumbar Spinal Fusion for Degenerative Disc Disease Pre-Surgical Documentation Worksheet” (Form #851666) that is available in Forms on Demand.

Should you have any further questions regarding CMS documentation requirements for Lumbar Spinal Fusions, please contact the Quality Department.

Safe Procedure and Surgical Verification

The right procedure, at the right site, every time

For the safety of our surgical and invasive procedure patients, West Florida Hospital has designated the total elimination of wrong site and surgical events as one of our facility’s performance expectations for 2014. In order to accomplish this critical goal, we are counting on the full support of our Medical Staff. Achieving this goal will protect our patients, our clinicians, and our facility, and is an important part of our commitment to the communities we serve.

To ensure that every patient receives the right procedure, at the right site, every time, the patient’s identity, correct procedure, and correct site must be confirmed before the beginning of every surgical or invasive procedure. This verification process must be completed in all areas where invasive procedures are performed including:

- Operating Room
- Endoscopy
- IR/Interventional
- ED
- Imaging
- Bedside

To support our safety goal on behalf of our patients, we have elected the following requirements:

- A single, organizational Procedural and Surgical Verification Policy
- A uniform procedural safety checklist by specialty area
- A pre-procedure verification that is completed prior to any sedation or anesthesia, and involves the patient or patient designer

A “Time Out” that is initiated and led by the physician with active participation and agreement of all team members

- Imaging studies in the procedure area and reviewed prior to initiation of time out
- A post-procedure debriefing

Thank you for your support of this critical initiative. If you have any questions, please contact Brenda Pearson, ext. 4806.

Dating and Timing of Medical Record Entries

West Florida Healthcare Physician Badge System

We are pleased to announce that the new physician badge system has been implemented. Badges now allow access to all Secured Areas including Operating Room, Cardiac Catheter Lab and Emergency Department and Cardiac Rehab. In addition, new physician badges are available to those who do not have a badge. Please contact the Physician Staff Office at 494-4705 for assistance.

Our ER Wait Time at Your Fingertips

Test ER to 23000 on your mobile phone to receive a message displaying the average wait time to see a medical provider.

Go to www.WestFloridaHospital.com to find your average wait time, updated every thirty minutes.
September is Sepsis Awareness Month

Sepsis Bundle
To be completed within three hours:
1. Measure lactate level stat
2. Obtain blood cultures stat prior to antibiotic administration
3. Administer broad spectrum antibiotic within one hour of sepsis identification
4. In the event of hypotension SBP <90 mmHg or MAP <65 mmHg, give 30 mg/kg crystalloid
To be completed within six hours:
5. Administer vasopressor for hypotension not responding to fluid resuscitation (Septic Shock) to maintain MAP >65 mmHg
6. Repeat lactate level within six hours if initial lactate level was greater than 2 mmol/L.

- WPH severe sepsis with and without shock mortality Jan-July 2014: 13%
- United States approximate severe sepsis with and without shock mortality: 50%

- Please use the Sepsis Evidence Based CPOE order sets as best practice to ensure sepsis bundle compliance.

A CME credit is available for Sepsis on Healthstream: “Early Detection and Treatment.” If you are interested, call Cheryl Howell at 494-6160.

What is Bioethics?

Bioethics is the exploration of ethical issues and questions that relate to a patient’s condition.

Some examples of ethical issues may include:
- Conflict resolution
- Resuscitation decisions
- Dealing with life sustaining treatment

The Bioethics Team
- Physicians: Dr. Charles Bryan Dr. Linda Stallings Dr. Andrea Hackel Dr. Kristin Baker
- Nurses: Karen White Trevino (CNO) Janet Haugen Jennifer Baldwin Beth Matthews
- Social Worker: Liza Kuehn
- Clergy
- Other members of the Bioethics Committee: Dr. Terry Stallings Roberta King Debbie Wooten Joanne Massey, Ph.D.

Teresa Johnson

What to do:
- If you have questions about the Hospital’s Bioethics Program, please feel free to call Roberta King, Risk Management, at 494-4859.
- If you have any questions about CDI, contact Rhonda Matson, RN at ext. 6542.