

Guideline: G-007
Executive Committee
Approved by Council: June 7, 1997

Note to Readers: In the event of any inconsistency between this document and the legislation that affects chiropractic practice, the legislation governs.

Intent

To advise members that it is permissible to unit bill in limited circumstances.

Before You Unit Bill

Unit billing refers to charging and invoicing a patient for each service performed at a single visit, as opposed to charging and invoicing the patient for the whole visit. The following conditions must be met before a member may engage in unit billing:

- CCO's regulations and policies related to business and billing practices are not contravened.
- The unit billing is fair and reasonable. Members should be aware that charging a fee excessive to the service performed may constitute professional misconduct.
- Patients are fully informed about the member's billing practices in advance of any treatment, are not subjected to undue pressure, and voluntarily agree to the billing practices.
- Members comply with OHIP billing rules and any appropriate rules set by other third party payers, provided the third party payers notify the practitioner in advance of the service being performed.

CCO urges members to provide an itemized account without being requested to do so by the patient. It is suggested that members comply with the recommended fee schedule as set by the professional association. Members should be cognizant of the provisions of the professional misconduct regulation under the *Chiropractic Act, 1991*, and CCO's policies relating to billing.

Provisions of the Professional Misconduct Regulation

Pursuant to the professional misconduct regulation, the following are acts of professional misconduct:

Business Practices

1. Submitting an account or charge for services the member knows is false or misleading.
2. Failing to disclose to a patient the fee for a service before the service is provided, including a fee not payable by the patient.
3. Charging a block fee unless,
 - the patient is given the option of paying for each service as it is provided;
 - a unit cost per service is specified; and
 - the member agrees to refund to the patient the unspent portion of the block fee, calculated by reference to the number of services provided, multiplied by the cost per service.
4. Failing to itemize an account for professional services,
 - if requested to do so by the patient or the person or agency who is to pay, in whole or in part, for the services; or
 - if the account includes a fee for a product or device or a service other than a treatment.
5. Selling any debt owed to the member for professional services. This does not include the use of credit cards to pay for professional services.

CCO Policy Relating to Billing

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CCO has the following policy relating to Billing Practices: Registrants may not bill any payer fees in excess of his/her usual normal fee billed to a private patient for similar services. The practice of having one fee for patients and a higher fee for a third party payer is unacceptable and may lead to disciplinary action.