



**TO:** Hospitals and ASCs

**FROM:** Sheila Goethel, RHIT, CDIP, CCS, Coding Services Senior Manager

**DATE:** May 7, 2020

**RE:** COVID specimen collection fee - now available for hospital settings

HCPCS codes G2023 and G2024 (specimen collection codes) were first released in late March, but reporting was restricted solely to independent labs. Last week's announcement changed that reporting opportunity, so **hospitals may now report C9803 for the COVID specimen collection function.**

*See pg 7 on attached. "COVID-19 Diagnostic Testing"*

Hospital outpatient departments can be paid for symptom assessment and specimen collection for COVID-19 using a new HCPCS code C9803 (Hospital outpatient clinic visit specimen collection for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (sars-cov-2) (coronavirus disease [covid-19]), any specimen source) retroactive to March 1, 2020. The service would be conditionally packaged and not paid separately when furnished with another payable service under the OPPS. This approach helps hospitals to operate testing sites during the PHE. Medicare will pay a national rate of roughly \$23 for HCPCS code C9803 when it is not billed with a separately payable hospital outpatient service."

Like other PPS lab payment applications, reimbursement will only be available for this C code when billed independently. CAHs are not subject to the OPPS reporting structure, so expect it will be reimbursed on a reasonable cost. C9803 is retroactive/effective for Medicare claims on March 1, 2020. I expect that third-party payers will also acknowledge but you may need to check, as well as find out their effective date.

For more information:

<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/mm11765.pdf>

<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/mm11681.pdf>



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