

MEDICARE PART A BULLETIN

June 13, 1997

General Medicare Bulletin G-286

TO: All Medicare Providers

FROM: Andy DePirro, Director, Program Relations

SUBJECT: **COVERAGE ISSUES: HCFA-PUBLICATION 6**
SECTION 35-98 ELECTROSTIMULATION IN THE TREATMENT OF WOUNDS SECTION 60-2, INTRAPULMONARY PERCUSSIVE VENTILATOR (IPV)

ATTENTION MEDICARE BUSINESS OFFICE MANAGER: Please distribute to all appropriate health care facility personnel.

The Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) published these coverage clarifications and/or new implementing instructions, via the Medicare Coverage Issues Manual (HCFA-Publication 6), Transmittal 98. Even though these instructions were issued to providers via the HCFA manual revision process, the purpose of this bulletin is to ensure providers are aware of these Medicare coverage issue regulations.

35-98 ELECTROSTIMULATION IN THE TREATMENT OF WOUNDS:

Not covered. This section indicates that there is insufficient evidence to determine any clinically significant differences in healing rates where electrostimulation was utilized. Therefore, Electrostimulation in the treatment of wounds cannot be covered by Medicare because its effectiveness has not been adequately demonstrated.

60-21 INTRAPULMONARY PERCUSSIVE VENTILATOR (IPV):

Not covered. This section indicates that studies do not demonstrate any advantage of IPV over that achieved with good pulmonary care in the hospital environment and no studies have been completed to support the effectiveness of the IPV device in the home setting. Therefore, the IPV device in the home setting is not covered by the Medicare Program.

Questions regarding this bulletin may be addressed to the Medicare Part A Customer Service Department by calling (904) 355-8899.

SECTION 35-98 ELECTROSTIMULATION IN THE TREATMENT OF WOUNDS - NOT COVERED

Electrical stimulation (ES) has been used or studied for many different applications, one of which is accelerating wound healing. The types of ES used for healing chronic venous and arterial wounds, and pressure ulcers are: direct current (DC), alternating current (AC), pulsed current (PC), pulsed

electromagnetic induction (PEMI), and spinal cord stimulation (SCS). An example of AC is transcutaneous electrical stimulation (TENS). The PEMI includes Pulsed Electromagnetic Field (PEMF) and Pulsed Electromagnetic Energy (PEE) using pulsed radio frequency energy, both of which are nonthermal i.e., they do not produce heat. Some ES use generators to create energy in the radio frequency band, delivered in megahertz (MHZ). They typically deliver energy by contacting means such as coils, rather than by leads or surface electrodes.

There is insufficient evidence to determine any clinically significant differences in healing rates. Therefore, ES cannot be covered by Medicare because its effectiveness has not been adequately demonstrated.

SECTION 60-21 **INTRAPULMONARY PERCUSSIVE VENTILATOR (IPV) -
NOT COVERED**

IPV is a mechanized form of chest physical therapy. Instead of a therapist clapping or slapping the patient's chest wall, the IPV delivers mini-bursts (more than 200 per minute) of respiratory gasses to the lungs via a mouthpiece. Its intended purpose is to mobilize endobronchial secretions and diffuse patchy atelectasis. The patient controls variables such as inspiratory time, peak pressure and delivery rates.

Studies do not demonstrate any advantage of IPV over that achieved with good pulmonary care in the hospital environment and there are no studies in the home setting. There is no data to support the effectiveness of the device. Therefore, IPV in the home setting is not covered.