

Social Security Administration

§ 404.1519k

§ 404.1519i Other sources for consultative examinations.

We will use a medical source other than your treating source for a purchased examination or test in situations including, but not limited to, the following situations:

(a) Your treating source prefers not to perform such an examination or does not have the equipment to provide the specific data needed;

(b) There are conflicts or inconsistencies in your file that cannot be resolved by going back to your treating source;

(c) You prefer a source other than your treating source and have a good reason for your preference;

(d) We know from prior experience that your treating source may not be a productive source, e.g., he or she has consistently failed to provide complete or timely reports.

[65 FR 11876, Mar. 7, 2000]

§ 404.1519j Objections to the medical source designated to perform the consultative examination.

You or your representative may object to your being examined by a medical source we have designated to perform a consultative examination. If there is a good reason for the objection, we will schedule the examination with another medical source. A good reason may be that the medical source we designated had previously represented an interest adverse to you. For example, the medical source may have represented your employer in a workers' compensation case or may have been involved in an insurance claim or legal action adverse to you. Other things we will consider include: The presence of a language barrier, the medical source's office location (e.g., 2nd floor, no elevator), travel restrictions, and whether the medical source had examined you in connection with a previous disability determination or decision that was unfavorable to you. If your objection is that a medical source allegedly "lacks objectivity" in general, but not in relation to you personally, we will review the allegations. See § 404.1519s. To avoid a delay in processing your claim, the consultative examination in your case will be changed to another medical source while a re-

view is being conducted. We will handle any objection to use of the substitute medical source in the same manner. However, if we had previously conducted such a review and found that the reports of the medical source in question conformed to our guidelines, we will not change your examination.

[65 FR 11876, Mar. 7, 2000]

§ 404.1519k Purchase of medical examinations, laboratory tests, and other services.

We may purchase medical examinations, including psychiatric and psychological examinations, X-rays and laboratory tests (including specialized tests, such as pulmonary function studies, electrocardiograms, and stress tests) from a medical source.

(a) Subject to the provisions of § 405.805(b)(2) of this chapter in claims adjudicated under the procedures in part 405 of this chapter, the rate of payment to be used for purchasing medical or other services necessary to make determinations of disability may not exceed the highest rate paid by Federal or public agencies in the State for the same or similar types of service. See §§ 404.1624 and 404.1626 of this part.

(b) If a physician's bill or a request for payment for a physician's services includes a charge for a laboratory test for which payment may be made under this part, the amount payable with respect to the test shall be determined as follows:

(1) If the bill or request for payment indicates that the test was personally performed or supervised by the physician who submitted the bill (or for whose services the request for payment was made) or by another physician with whom that physician shares his or her practice, the payment will be based on the physician's usual and customary charge for the test or the rates of payment which the State uses for purchasing such services, whichever is the lesser amount.

(2) If the bill or request for payment indicates that the test was performed by an independent laboratory, the amount of reimbursement will not exceed the billed cost of the independent laboratory or the rate of payment which the State uses for purchasing

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such services, whichever is the lesser amount. A nominal payment may be made to the physician for collecting, handling and shipping a specimen to the laboratory if the physician bills for such a service. The total reimbursement may not exceed the rate of payment which the State uses for purchasing such services.

(c) The State will assure that it can support the rate of payment it uses. The State shall also be responsible for monitoring and overseeing the rate of payment it uses to ensure compliance with paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section.

[56 FR 36957, Aug. 1, 1991, as amended at 65 FR 11876, Mar. 7, 2000; 71 FR 16444, Mar. 31, 2006]

§ 404.1519m Diagnostic tests or procedures.

We will request the results of any diagnostic tests or procedures that have been performed as part of a workup by your treating source or other medical source and will use the results to help us evaluate impairment severity or prognosis. However, we will not order diagnostic tests or procedures that involve significant risk to you, such as myelograms, arteriograms, or cardiac catheterizations for the evaluation of disability under the Social Security program. A State agency medical consultant, or a medical expert (as defined in § 405.5 of this chapter) in claims adjudicated under the procedures in part 405 of this chapter, must approve the ordering of any diagnostic test or procedure when there is a chance it may involve significant risk. The responsibility for deciding whether to perform the examination rests with the medical source designated to perform the consultative examination.

[56 FR 36957, Aug. 1, 1991, as amended at 65 FR 11876, Mar. 7, 2000; 71 FR 16444, Mar. 31, 2006]

§ 404.1519n Informing the medical source of examination scheduling, report content, and signature requirements.

The medical sources who perform consultative examinations will have a good understanding of our disability programs and their evidentiary requirements. They will be made fully

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aware of their responsibilities and obligations regarding confidentiality as described in § 401.105(e). We will fully inform medical sources who perform consultative examinations at the time we first contact them, and at subsequent appropriate intervals, of the following obligations:

(a) *Scheduling.* In scheduling full consultative examinations, sufficient time should be allowed to permit the medical source to take a case history and perform the examination, including any needed tests. The following minimum scheduling intervals (*i.e.*, time set aside for the individual, not the actual duration of the consultative examination) should be used.

(1) Comprehensive general medical examination—at least 30 minutes;

(2) Comprehensive musculoskeletal or neurological examination—at least 20 minutes;

(3) Comprehensive psychiatric examination—at least 40 minutes;

(4) Psychological examination—at least 60 minutes (Additional time may be required depending on types of psychological tests administered); and

(5) All others—at least 30 minutes, or in accordance with accepted medical practices.

We recognize that actual practice will dictate that some examinations may require longer scheduling intervals depending on the circumstances in a particular situation. We also recognize that these minimum intervals may have to be adjusted to allow for those claimants who do not attend their scheduled examination. The purpose of these minimum scheduling timeframes is to ensure that such examinations are complete and that sufficient time is made available to obtain the information needed to make an accurate determination in your case. State agencies will monitor the scheduling of examinations (through their normal consultative examination oversight activities) to ensure that any overscheduling is avoided, as overscheduling may lead to examinations that are not thorough.

(b) *Report content.* The reported results of your medical history, examination, requested laboratory findings, discussions and conclusions must conform to accepted professional standards and practices in the medical field