



## **CPT® Editorial Panel Molecular Pathology Coding Workgroup**

The CPT Editorial Panel Molecular Pathology Coding Workgroup (MPCW) was convened in December 2009 with the charge to construct a new subsection of the CPT Pathology and Laboratory subsection, guidelines, definitions and new CPT codes to report molecular pathology. The goal of the MPCW was to provide more current descriptions of the technology required for these services and to more accurately identify and describe the services for all end users of the CPT code set.

Participants in the MPCW include Medicare contractor carrier medical directors, representatives of CMS and the private payer community, representatives of the medical specialties whose members perform these tests, and industry representatives.

The MPCW's charge focused on medical laboratory procedures involving the non-microscopic analyses of nucleic acid to detect variants in genes that might be indicative of germline (eg, constitutional) disorders, somatic (eg, neoplasia) conditions, or histocompatibility antigens (eg, HLA). The MPCW has identified tests for genes described by the Human Genome Organization (HUGO) approved gene names.

With recognition of the large number of tests and genes, the initial efforts of the MPCW and associated subgroups, in bi-weekly meetings over the last year, have focused on higher frequency tests. At this time, the Workgroup has proposed codes which address greater than 90% of medically useful molecular testing currently being performed and within the realm of the workgroup's charge. The services identified by the MPCW as CPT codes will include all analytical services performed in the test (eg, cell lysis, nucleic acid stabilization, extraction, digestion, amplification, detection and interpretation), with robust granularity in the code descriptors to better allow providers and payers to communicate the tests that are actually performed.

The initial set of these codes will be published in the *CPT® 2012* book. MPCW continues to construct codes for less common analytes and more complex analyses.

It is anticipated that the current "stacking code" method of reporting molecular pathology services will be deleted upon conclusion of the workgroup's activities.

If you have any questions relevant to this issue, please contact us at [mopath@ama-assn.org](mailto:mopath@ama-assn.org). It is important to note that release of premature information, including Panel meeting information, discussions, code assignment and final wording are not made available for general review, can be a source of confusion, and is prohibited under the confidentiality agreement of the CPT meetings.