

# Special Bulletin



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September 2008

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To: All Hospitals  
Subject: Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama Hospital Claims Filing Guidelines

**Effective October 1, 2008**, all hospitals billing for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama members will be required to file a valid Present on Admission (POA) indicator for specific hospital-acquired conditions. Conditions requiring valid POA indicators are provided below:

- **Object left in the body after surgery** - Unintended retention of a foreign object in a patient after surgery or other procedure
- **Air embolism** - Patient death or serious disability directly attributable to an intravascular air embolism that occurs while being cared for in a healthcare facility
- **Blood incompatibility** - Patient death or serious disability directly attributable to a hemolytic reaction due to the administration of ABO/HLA-incompatible blood or blood products
- **Hospital-acquired pressure ulcers** (decubitus ulcers) - stage three and four
- **Hospital-acquired catheter-associated urinary tract infections**
- **Hospital-acquired vascular catheter** - associated infection
- **Hospital-acquired mediastinitis** after coronary artery bypass surgery
- **Falls and trauma** (hospital-acquired) - fractures, dislocations, intracranial injuries, crushing injuries and burns

For the above conditions, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama will require one of the following POA indicators:

Y = Yes. Diagnosis was present at time of inpatient admission.

N = No. Diagnosis was not present at time of inpatient admission.

U = No information in the record. Documentation insufficient to determine if the condition was present at the time of inpatient admission.

W = Clinically undetermined. Provider unable to clinically determine whether the condition was present at the time of inpatient admission.

When POA indicator "N" is used, hospitals should report any patient liability amount with Value Code 31. Value Code 31 is defined by the National Uniform Billing Committee (NUBC) as Patient Liability Amount. The amount reported with value code 31 in combination with POA "N" will be deducted from the total non-covered charges, and the remaining non-covered amount will be posted on the remittance as the contractual write-off. Failure to report value code 31 when POA "N" is used will result in the total noncovered amount being applied to the hospital's contractual write-off amount.

Additional information regarding Serious Preventable Events may be found on our web site, at [www.bcbsal.com](http://www.bcbsal.com).

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