

# Billing Guidelines for Cognitive Behavioral Psychotherapy and Cognitive Rehabilitation Therapy

## Cognitive Behavioral Psychotherapy (90834)

Cognitive training, by itself, is typically billed as an educational service. However, it may be possible for health care providers to incorporate the use of challenging brain training exercises as a component of a client's overall psychotherapy intervention for a wide variety of disorders and have the services covered by the client's insurance company. Naturally, providers will need to keep in mind that insurance coverage and authorized billing codes can vary for each client. Thus, it is possible for brain training exercises to be utilized as cognitive behavioral components of an individual's overall treatment plan within a psychotherapy treatment session. In general, the focus of the inclusion of Cognitive Behavioral Exercises (CBE) will need to address overall therapeutic goals that include improving behavioral self-control, enhancing emotional regulation, and facilitating a client's insight regarding methods and attitudes for improving their academic, work or social functioning. Therapists will need to document in the treatment notes how the CBE training was utilized for achieving the specified cognitive therapeutic goals and facilitated the client's treatment progress. Specific examples of therapeutic notes may include improving frustration tolerance, acceptance of challenges, developing problem solving techniques and strategies, enhancing self-esteem, increasing behavioral control in order to ignore distractions, learning to let go of negative emotional responses, and developing the behavioral control to sit still and sustain attention when engaging in non-entertaining tasks.

The Captain's Log MindPower system also provides the opportunity for clients to train independently at home using a prescribed treatment plan developed by their clinician. The results of this at home training are automatically synchronized with the in-office records and can easily be reviewed by the clinician and also modified as needed. Generally, the at home training would not be billable in respect to treatment time unless tele-therapy services are covered for interactive therapy guidance during training. There is the possibility though that insurance may cover the cost of the at home license or it may be possible for individuals to use their Health Saving accounts to pay for this service separately. Otherwise, therapists will need to require a one time payment from the client for this service.

## Cognitive Rehabilitation (97127 and G0515)

Typically, cognitive rehabilitation services are covered for specified therapeutic goals, but the provision of these services is usually restricted to clients who have a neurological disorder such as a traumatic brain injury or stroke. Since insurance coverage can vary for each individual, providers will need to review the various requirements and billing codes stipulated by that individual's insurance plan. Below are general guidelines that describe the two appropriate billing codes for cognitive rehabilitation therapy.

### When Do You Use the Different Codes?

97127	G0515
Medicare Fee for Service	
X	Medicare Fee-for-Service only recognizes G0515.
Medicare Advantage Plans	
X	Medicare Part C should recognize G0515, but make sure to check with your plan.
Commercial Plans	
Check with your plan. Many commercial plans will likely accept 97127.	Check with your plan. Some plans may accept only G0515.
Medicaid	
Check with your plan to see if they accept 97127.	Check with your plan. Some plans may accept only G0515.

### What is the Difference Between these Codes?

97127	G0515
<b>Untimed</b>	<b>15-Minute Units</b>
97127 is a service-based code, which means you should only bill 1 unit for the service provided regardless of the face-to-face time.	Just like the "old" cognitive intervention code, G0515 should be billed in 15-minute units, following the 8-minute rule.
<b>Expands the emphasis to more cognitive areas</b>	<b>Emphasis is on attention, memory, and problem solving</b>
97127 focuses on executive function, reasoning, pragmatic functioning, and the use of compensatory strategies for managing the performance of activities.	G0515 is limited to the development of cognitive skills to improve attention, memory, and problem solving
<b>CPT Listed Code</b>	<b>HCPCS Code</b>
97127 is a Current Procedural Terminology code and is published in the 2018 CPT Book.	G0515 is a Health Care Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) code that was created for use by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

## Which Codes to Use When Billing Cognitive Rehabilitation Therapy

There are two new cognitive intervention codes that started January 1, 2018

### 1) 97127 - Billed as one unit (not timed based)

Therapeutic interventions that focus on cognitive function (e.g., attention, memory, reasoning, executive function, problem solving, and/or pragmatic functioning) and compensatory strategies to manage the performance of an activity (e.g., managing time or schedules, initiating, organizing and sequencing tasks), direct (one-on-one) patient contact.

### 2) G0515 – Billed in 15 minute units rounding up after 8 minutes

Development of cognitive skills to improve attention, memory, problem-solving (includes compensatory training), direct (one-on-one) patient contact, each 15 minutes.