

Asthma Medication Ratio Tip Sheet

To ensure our members get the highest quality health care, HPSM wants to help our providers comply with HEDIS's Asthma Medication Ratio (AMR) measure. This FAQ explains the AMR and highlights ways that providers can achieve compliance.

What does the AMR measure?

The AMR measures the percentage of patients aged 5 to 64 with persistent asthma and a ratio of controller to total meds of 0.5 or greater (measured as medication units).

Who is eligible for the AMR?

The AMR targets all patients in the group above who have had one of the following in the last 12 months:

- At least one ED visit or one acute inpatient visit (with an asthma diagnosis)
- Four inpatient or observation visits and at least two asthma medication dispensing events
- At least four asthma medication dispensing events

What are the most effective strategies for complying with the AMR?

- Educate patients about the difference between controller and reliever medication (as well as proper usage of inhaler meds)
- Discuss Asthma Action Plans (AAP) with patients to ensure they know how to control their asthma
- Assess and reassess asthma symptoms and the patient's AAP at every visit to determine if more controller medication (or a higher dose) is required
- Consider more frequent visits until the patient is compliant
- Limit the number of auto-refill rescue meds (versus controller meds) that can be issued
- Consider prescribing 60-90 days' supply of controller meds
- Encourage patients to receive their annual flu shot

Which ICD-10 and CPT codes are eligible for the AMR?

Persistent asthma	ICD-10 codes: J45.20-J45.998	Exclusions Patients who have had the following diagnoses are excluded: emphysema, COPD, obstructive chronic bronchitis, chronic respiratory conditions due to fumes/vapors, cystic fibrosis, acute respiratory failure
ED visit	CPT codes: 99281-99285	
Inpatient	CPT codes: 99221-99233, 99238-99239, 99251-99255, 99291.	
Outpatient	CPT codes: 99201-99215, 99241-99245, 99381-99397, 99401-99404, 99411-99412, 99420, 99429, 99455-99456, 99217-99220	

How is the AMR calculated?

Dispensing Events: Oral medication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculating dispensing events helps to allocate the correct year for when the medication was dispensed • One prescription counts as any medication lasting ≤30 days • To calculate dispensing events for prescriptions, divide by 30 • Different medications dispensed on the same day count as separate events
Dispensing Events: Inhalers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All inhalers of the same medication dispensed on the same day count as one event
Dispensing Events: Injections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each injection counts as one event (i.e., any other injection, whether of the same prescription or a different prescription, counts as a separate event)
Units of medication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each individual medication in any amount lasting less than or equal to 30 days is counted as one medication • One medication unit is defined as one inhaler canister, one injection or ≤30 day supply of oral medications
Data source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claims and pharmacy data