



Audience: All Providers

How to document Medicare annual wellness virtual visits.

## Documenting Virtual Medicare Annual Wellness Visits

Medicare has designated the following codes as telehealth approved services:

- **G0438:** annual wellness visit, initial visit
- **G0439:** annual wellness visit, subsequent visit

There are several elements that must be performed and documented to support annual wellness visit billing. To review all elements, click [here](#).

Additional guidance is provided below to address performance and documentation of selected elements.

### Element 4: Measure

4. Measure	Obtain the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Weight (or waist circumference, if appropriate) and blood pressure</li><li>• Other routine measurements as deemed appropriate based on medical and family history</li></ul>
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- Providing the service virtually may limit your ability to meet this requirement.
- During the COVID-19 public health emergency, you can meet this requirement in one of the following ways:
  - **Patient reported:**
    - Ask the patient if they can provide their height, weight and BP using available home monitoring devices.
    - Use this **SmartPhrase** to notate that the measurements are patient reported:
      - **COVIDAWVPATIENTREPORTHTWTBP** – “Height, weight and BP are as follows \*\*\* and based on patient reported/captured from home measurement device.”
  - **Patient unable to capture:**
    - If the patient is unable to provide any of these measurements, document the attempt and move on.
    - Use this **SmartPhrase** to notate that the patient was unable to report these items:
      - **COVIDAWVMISSINGHTWTBP** – “The patient was asked to provide height, weight and BP. Due to limited or no availability of the necessary devices to perform these measurements, this element of the visit is deferred until a later encounter.”



## Element 5: Detect Cognitive Impairment

5. Detect any cognitive impairment the beneficiary may have	Assess the beneficiary's cognitive function by direct observation, while considering information from beneficiary reports and concerns raised by family members, friends, caregivers, and others. If appropriate, use a brief validated structured cognitive assessment tool. For more information, refer to the National Institute on Aging's <a href="#">Alzheimer's and Dementia Resources for Professionals</a> website.
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- This element is assessed via direct observation and only requires the use of additional testing modalities.
- Activities that require the patient to draw pictures can be done virtually, with the patient drawing and holding up the drawings to the camera.

## Element 6: Review Depression Risk Factors

6. Review the beneficiary's potential risk factors for depression, including current or past experiences with depression or other mood disorders	Use any appropriate screening instrument. You may select from various available standardized screening tests designed for this purpose. For more information, refer to the <a href="#">Depression section</a> on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration–Health Resources and Services Administration's Screening Tools website.
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- These services do not need to be performed in person and can be done via a virtual visit through a Q&A session.

## Element 7: Hearing Screening

7. Review the beneficiary's functional ability and level of safety	Use direct observation of the beneficiary or select appropriate questions from various available screening questionnaires, or use standardized questionnaires recognized by national professional medical organizations to assess, at a minimum, the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to successfully perform ADLs</li><li>• Fall risk</li><li>• Hearing impairment</li><li>• Home safety</li></ul>
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- This element is assessed via direct observation.
- A formal hearing test is not required to meet this requirement.