



## Foreword

For many years, patients and health providers have experienced the benefits of Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT). MNT preserves health, reduces illness, and improves quality of life. The scientific literature also provides strong and convincing evidence that people benefit from MNT. But MNT also offers advantages to the Indian health care system. MNT helps our system save money, leverage resources, and provide a source of revenue through Medicare reimbursement. Put simply, MNT increasingly pays for itself.

This timely step-by-step guide provides registered dietitians and other health professionals with the information they need to obtain Medicare reimbursement for MNT. The advice in this guide will help you enhance your facility's ability to obtain reimbursement for MNT services. This will help increase access to MNT services throughout the Indian health care system.

This guide also reveals how teamwork among providers, administrators, and data entry and billing personnel makes a difference—not only to the health of patients, but also to a clinic's financial bottom line. Importantly, we anticipate that Medicare reimbursement for MNT will soon extend to other chronic conditions beyond diabetes and kidney disease; this guide will prepare you to maximize new reimbursement opportunities as they become available.

This is an exciting time in Indian health care. We are increasingly focusing our efforts on health promotion, disease prevention, and chronic care management. Many of us know that MNT is integral to these efforts and to improving the overall health of American Indians and Alaska Natives. By increasing reimbursement for MNT services, we hope to improve access to nutrition services so that all American Indians and Alaska Natives who need or desire this service can obtain it in a timely manner.

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“This is a very good example of ‘government money well spent’ in producing such a fine document.... I commend and thank you and those involved! We can only hope that others will take this as an example of what they can do to assist others in implementing the numerous and complex programs at their facilities.”

–Kathleen Bristlin

Bemidji Area Indian Health Service