



ASE

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
ECHOCARDIOGRAPHY

Sound Saves Lives

MANDATORY MEDICARE ECHOCARDIOGRAPHY ACCREDITATION

BACKGROUND

Accreditation is the formal independent clinical review process that allows organizations and medical systems to demonstrate their commitment to quality to ensure the minimum standards of care are met. While most labs in the United States are required to attain accreditation, **echocardiography labs are not mandated to go through a federal standardization process associated with obtaining accreditation.**

THE ISSUE

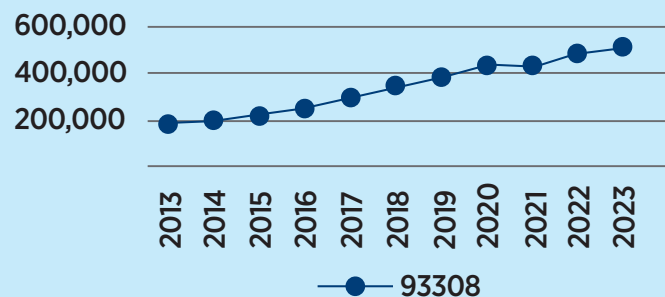
The lack of standardized training has led to instances of inappropriate echocardiography use, resulting in less optimal patient care and unnecessary Medicare spending.

Currently, any provider can submit claims for echocardiography CPT codes, leading some clinicians to order and perform inaccurate echocardiograms.

This can result in:

- **incorrect diagnoses**
- **unnecessary care delays**
- **missed pathology**
- **needless patient financial burden**
- **additional and invasive patient tests**
- **unnecessary Medicare spending**

MEDICARE UTILIZATION OF CPT CODE 93308 2013-2023



The increase in utilization of echocardiography codes is due to advancements in echocardiography technology, which has increased utilization of services by those not specialized in cardiovascular care or in the provision of echocardiograms.



MEDPAC RECOMMENDATION AND PRIOR LEGISLATION

In 2005, the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) recommended Congress require mandatory accreditation for all imaging services performed on Medicare beneficiaries to curb rapid utilization and spending growth and ensure patient safety. However, in 2008 Congress passed the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) which mandated accreditation in Medicare Part B for a subset of imaging providers, but excluded echocardiography-specific clinicians.



ASE RECOMMENDATION

Support parity of imaging services by mandating accreditation for Medicare coverage of echocardiography services to improve patient outcomes and quality of care, which will prevent unnecessary utilization and lower Medicare spending in all settings where echocardiography services are provided.

American Society of Echocardiography (ASE) is the Society for Cardiovascular Ultrasound Professionals™. It is the largest global organization for cardiovascular ultrasound imaging serving physicians, sonographers, nurses, veterinarians, and scientists and as such is the leader and advocate, setting practice standards and guidelines for the field.