

6.5 SNF PPS Eligibility Criteria

Under SNF PPS, beneficiaries must meet the established eligibility requirements for a Part A SNF-level stay. These requirements are summarized in this section. Refer to the **Medicare General Information, Eligibility, and Entitlement Manual**, Chapter 1 (Pub. 100-1), and the **Medicare Benefit Policy Manual**, Chapter 8 (Pub. 100-2), for detailed SNF coverage requirements and policies.

Technical Eligibility Requirements

The beneficiary must meet the following criteria:

- Beneficiary is enrolled in Medicare Part A and has days available to use.
- There has been a three-day prior qualifying hospital stay (i.e., three midnights).
- Admission for SNF-level services is within 30 days of discharge from an acute care stay or within 30 days of discharge from a SNF level of care.

Clinical Eligibility Requirements

A beneficiary is eligible for SNF extended care if all of the following requirements are met:

- The beneficiary has a need for and receives medically necessary skilled care on a daily basis, which is provided by or under the direct supervision of skilled nursing or rehabilitation professionals.
- As a practical matter, these skilled services can only be provided in an SNF.
- The services provided must be for a condition:
 - for which the resident was treated during the qualifying hospital stay, or
 - that arose while the resident was in the SNF for treatment of a condition for which they were previously treated in a hospital.

Physician Certification

The attending physician or a physician on the staff of the skilled nursing facility who has knowledge of the case—or a nurse practitioner (NP), physician assistant (PA), or clinical nurse specialist (CNS) who does not have a direct or indirect employment relationship with the facility but who is working in collaboration with the physician—must certify and then periodically recertify the need for extended care services in the skilled nursing facility.

- **Certifications** are required at the time of admission or as soon thereafter as is reasonable and practicable (42 CFR 424.20). The initial certification
 - affirms, per the required content found in 42 CFR 424.20, that the resident meets the existing SNF level of care definition, or

- validates via written statement that the resident's assignment to one of the upper PDPM groups (defined below) is correct.
 - Those nursing groups encompassed by the Extensive Services, Special Care High, Special Care Low, and Clinically Complex nursing categories;
 - PT and OT groups TA, TB, TC, TD, TE, TF, TG, TJ, TK, TN, and TO;
 - SLP groups SC, SE, SF, SH, SI, SJ, SK, and SL; and
 - The NTA component's uppermost (12+) comorbidity group.
- **Re-certifications** are used to document the continued need for skilled extended care services.
 - The first re-certification is required no later than the 14th day of the SNF stay.
 - Subsequent re-certifications are required at no later than 30-day intervals after the date of the first re-certification.
 - The initial certification and first re-certification may be signed at the same time.