

Bell Curve for E& M Codes – Family Practice

Providers should be careful to assign level of service accurately and carefully in order to avoid fraudulent billing charges by Medicare and to ensure that the pattern of level assignment conforms with that of the provider's specialty.

By pattern of level assignment I mean the curve which you would draw on a piece of graph paper with level of service as the horizontal axis and numbers of each level of service provided over a given period of time as the vertical axis. If you did this for a year for a family physician, the result would be close to a bell shaped curve with a few level 1 services at the lower left and about the same number of level 5 services at the lower right end of the curve. At the peak would be the most numerous level of service level 3. Somewhere about the middle of the climbing left side of the curve would be a moderate number of level 2 services and on the declining right side of the curve would be a roughly equal number of level 4 services.

