

Subject: Review of Services for Benefit Determinations in the Absence of a Company Applicable Medical Policy or Clinical Utilization Management (UM) Guideline

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Status: Reviewed

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Description/Scope

The Company reviews services provided, or proposed to be provided, to members in order to determine benefits based on whether the services are medically necessary, not medically necessary, or investigational and not medically necessary. In making such benefit decisions, the Company determines whether such services are in accordance with generally accepted standards of medical practice. In so doing, the Company takes into account credible scientific evidence published in peer reviewed medical literature generally recognized by the relevant medical community, physician specialty society recommendations, and the views of physicians practicing in relevant clinical areas, and other relevant factors, as they relate to the member's clinical circumstances.

This document provides a list of resources available to Company Medical Reviewers to use in situations where the Company does not have a Medical Policy or Clinical UM Guideline that addresses the specific service or product for which benefits are requested. ***If a relevant Medical Policy or Clinical UM Guideline is available, it is to be used as the basis for decision-making, and this process is not to be followed. Utilization Management departments will follow their procedures to meet relevant timeframes and notification requirements as appropriate for urgent and non-urgent requests.***

- **NOTE:** PLEASE SEE THE DEFINITIONS OF "MEDICALLY NECESSARY" OR "MEDICAL NECESSITY" AND "INVESTIGATIONAL" IN THE COVERED INDIVIDUAL'S PLAN DOCUMENT FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING BENEFIT DETERMINATIONS.

PROCESS:

1. When a claim is submitted with an unlisted code, a request for predetermination is made, or a service, procedure, or product is otherwise subject to review, the Company reviewer will determine, based on the description of service,* if there is a relevant Medical Policy or Clinical UM Guideline pertaining to the procedure, service or product. If a relevant Medical Policy or Clinical UM Guideline is available, it is to be used as the basis for decision-making, and this process is not to be followed.
2. If no Medical Policy or Clinical UM Guideline is directly applicable to the decision to be made, reviewers will use their discretion and professional judgment to select resources from the list below or as otherwise identified by the reviewer, which may be appropriate to be referenced for the requested services based on the clinical circumstances of the member. If there is minimal or no relevant peer reviewed literature and/or none of the identified entities have policies or guidelines, this information will be considered by the reviewer in the context of the member's benefit plan and apparent lack of peer reviewed evidence related to the coverage for the requested service.
3. After Medical Reviewers have made their determination, they should document their decision and the resources used in the appropriate medical management system.

* **Note:** In determining if there is a relevant Medical Policy or Clinical UM Guideline, the reviewer will not consider procedure code alone. If an "unlisted" or "not otherwise classified" code is proposed, the detailed description of service will be the determining factor.

Rationale

This document provides a process to be followed when the Company does not have a Medical Policy or Clinical UM Guideline directly applicable to a particular determination of whether a service provided, or proposed to be provided, is medically necessary, not medically necessary, or investigational and not medically necessary. The list of resources included herein is not meant to be exhaustive. Reviewers should use those resources which may be relevant to the decision at hand. They should not feel compelled to use every resource in every case. Reviewers should use more than one resource when more than one resource is relevant to their decision. Reviewers should exercise their professional judgment in selecting appropriate resources and in rendering their determination.

Definitions

"Physician Specialty Society" means a United States medical specialty society that represents diplomates certified by a board recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties.

References

Government Agency, Medical Society, and Other Authoritative Publications:

1. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) – Clinical Information. Available at: <http://www.ahrq.gov/>. Accessed on June 12, 2023.
2. American Board of Medical Specialties. Specialty and Subspecialty Certificates. 2020. Available at: <http://www.abms.org/member-boards/specialty-subspecialty-certificates/>. Accessed on June 12, 2023.
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov>. Accessed on June 12, 2023.
4. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Available at: <https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/search.aspx>. Accessed on June 12, 2023.
5. DrugPoints® System (electronic version). Truven Health Analytics, Greenwood Village, CO. Available at: <http://www.micromedexolutions.com>. Accessed on June 12, 2023.
6. Lexicomp® Online. American Hospital Formulary Service® (AHFS®) Online, Hudson, Ohio, Lexi-Comp., Inc. Available at: <http://www.wolterskluwercoi.com/lexicomp-online/>. Accessed on June 12, 2023.
7. National Comprehensive Cancer Network®. NCCN Drugs & Biologic Compendium® (electronic version). For additional

information visit the NCCN website. https://www.nccn.org/professionals/drug_compendium/content/contents.asp. Accessed on June 1, 2022.

8. National Library of Medicine – PUBMED. Available at: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/entrez>. Accessed on June 12, 2023.

9. U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Available at: <http://www.fda.gov>. Accessed on June 12, 2023.

10. Physician specialty societies where publicly available:

*Subspecialties that have been approved, but not yet issued.

General Certificate(s)	Specialty Society	Subspecialty Certificate(s)
	<p>(+) Indicates Guidelines Publicly Available (-) Indicates Guidelines Not Publicly Available</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allergy and Immunology 	<p>American Academy of Asthma, Allergy and Immunology (AAAAI) (+) http://www.aaaai.org</p> <p>American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI) (+) https://college.acaai.org/</p>	None
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anesthesiology 	<p>American Society of Anesthesiologists® (ASA) (+) For additional information visit the ASA website: https://www.asahq.org/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical Care Medicine Hospice and Palliative Medicine Neurocritical Care* Pain Medicine Pediatric Anesthesiology Sleep Medicine
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colon and Rectal Surgery 	<p>American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons (ASCRS) (+) http://www.fascrs.org</p>	None
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dermatology 	<p>American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) (+) http://www.aad.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Micrographic Dermatologic Surgery* Dermatopathology Pediatric Dermatology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency Medicine 	<p>American College of Emergency Physicians® (ACEP) (+) http://www.acep.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anesthesiology Critical Care Medicine Emergency Medical Services Hospice and Palliative Medicine Internal Medicine- Critical Care Medicine Medical Toxicology Neurocritical Care* Pain Medicine Pediatric Emergency Medicine Sports Medicine Undersea and Hyperbaric Medicine
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Medicine 	<p>American Academy of Family Practice (AAFP) (+) http://www.aafp.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adolescent Medicine Geriatric Medicine Hospice and Palliative Medicine Pain Medicine Sleep Medicine Sports Medicine

General Certificate(s)	Specialty Society	Subspecialty Certificate(s)
	(+) Indicates Guidelines Publicly Available (-) Indicates Guidelines Not Publicly Available	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal Medicine 	American College of Physicians SM (ACP) (+) http://www.acponline.org	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adolescent Medicine Adult Congenital Heart Disease Advanced Heart Failure and Transplant Cardiology Cardiovascular Disease Clinical Cardiac Electrophysiology Critical Care Medicine Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism Gastroenterology Geriatric Medicine Hematology Hospice and Palliative Medicine Infectious Disease Interventional Cardiology Medical Oncology Nephrology Pulmonary Disease Rheumatology Sleep Medicine Sports Medicine Transplant Hepatology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinical Biochemical Genetics Clinical Genetics and Genomics (MD) Laboratory Genetics and Genomics 	American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG) (+) http://www.acmg.net American Board of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ABMGG) (+) www.abmgg.org	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical Biochemical Genetics Molecular Genetic Pathology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neurological Surgery 	American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) (+) For additional information visit the AANS website: https://www.aans.org/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neurocritical Care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nuclear Medicine 	American College of Nuclear Medicine (ACNM) (-) http://www.acnmonline.org	None
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obstetrics and Gynecology 	American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) (+) http://www.acog.org	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complex Family Planning Critical Care Medicine Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery Gynecologic Oncology Hospice and Palliative Medicine Maternal and Fetal Medicine Reproductive Endocrinology/ Infertility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ophthalmology 	American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) (+) For additional information visit the AAO website: https://www.aao.org/	None
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orthopaedic Surgery 	American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) (+) http://www.aaos.org	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orthopaedic Sports Medicine Surgery of the Hand
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery 	American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery (AAO-HNS) (+) http://www.entnet.org	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neurotology Complex Pediatric Otolaryngology* Plastic Surgery Within the Head and Neck* Sleep Medicine

General Certificate(s)	Specialty Society <i>(+) Indicates Guidelines Publicly Available</i> <i>(-) Indicates Guidelines Not Publicly Available</i>	Subspecialty Certificate(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pathology- Anatomic/ Pathology-Clinical Pathology-Anatomic Pathology-Clinical 	<p>College of American Pathologists (CAP) (+) http://www.cap.org</p> <p>American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) (-) http://www.ascp.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blood Banking/Transfusion Medicine Clinical Informatics Cytopathology Dermatopathology Neuropathology Pathology – Chemical Pathology – Forensic Pathology – Hematology Pathology – Medical Microbiology Pathology – Molecular Genetic Pathology - Pediatric
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pediatrics 	<p>American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) (+) http://www.aap.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adolescent Medicine Child Abuse Pediatrics Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics Hospice and Palliative Medicine Medical Toxicology Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine Neurodevelopmental Disabilities Pediatric Cardiology Pediatric Critical Care Medicine Pediatric Emergency Medicine Pediatric Endocrinology Pediatric Gastroenterology Pediatric Hematology-Oncology Pediatric Hospital Medicine* Pediatric Infectious Diseases Pediatric Nephrology Pediatric Pulmonology Pediatric Rheumatology Pediatric Transplant Hepatology Sleep Medicine Sports Medicine
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation 	<p>American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (AAPM&R) (+) http://www.aapmr.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brain Injury Medicine Hospice and Palliative Medicine Neuromuscular Medicine Pain Medicine Pediatric Rehabilitation Medicine Spinal Cord Injury Medicine Sports Medicine
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plastic Surgery 	<p>American Society of Plastic Surgeons® (ASPS) (+) http://www.plasticsurgery.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plastic Surgery Within the Head and Neck* Surgery of the Hand
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aerospace Medicine Occupational Medicine Public Health and General Preventive Medicine 	<p>American College of Preventive Medicine (ACPM) (+) http://www.acpm.org</p> <p>American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM) (+) http://www.acoem.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addiction Medicine Clinical Informatics Medical Toxicology Undersea and Hyperbaric Medicine
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Psychiatry Neurology Neurology with Special Qualification in Child Neurology 	<p>American Psychiatric Association (APA) (+) http://www.psychiatry.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addiction Psychiatry Brain Injury Medicine Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Clinical Neurophysiology Consultation-Liaison

General Certificate(s)	Specialty Society	Subspecialty Certificate(s)
	<p>(+) Indicates Guidelines Publicly Available (-) Indicates Guidelines Not Publicly Available</p> <p>American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) (+) http://www.aacap.org</p> <p>American Academy of Neurology® (AAN) (+) http://www.aan.com</p> <p>Child Neurology Society (CNS) (+) http://www.childneurologysociety.org</p>	<p>Neurology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Epilepsy • Forensic Psychiatry • Geriatric Psychiatry • Hospice and Palliative Medicine • Neurocritical Care* • Neurodevelopmental Disabilities • Neuromuscular Medicine • Pain Medicine • Sleep Medicine • Vascular Neurology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnostic Radiology • Interventional Radiology and Diagnostic Radiology • Medical Physics(Diagnostic, Nuclear, Therapeutic) • Radiation Oncology 	<p>American College of Radiology (ACR®) (+) http://www.acr.org</p> <p><i>NOTE: Do not confuse with American College of Rheumatology</i></p> <p>American Society for Therapeutic Radiation and Oncology ASTRO (+) For additional information visit the ASTRO website: https://www.astro.org/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospice and Palliative Medicine • Neuroradiology • Nuclear Radiology • Pain Medicine • Pediatric Radiology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Surgery • Vascular Surgery 	<p>American College of Surgeons (ACS) (+) http://www.facs.org</p> <p><i>NOTE: Do not confuse with American Cancer Society.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complex General Surgical Oncology • Hospice and Palliative Medicine • Pediatric Surgery • Surgery of the Hand • Surgical Critical Care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thoracic and Cardiac Surgery 	<p>Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS) (+) http://www.sts.org/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congenital Cardiac Surgery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urology 	<p>American Urological Association (AUA) (+) For additional information visit the AUA website: https://www.auanet.org/education/clinical-practice-guidelines.cfm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery • Pediatric Urology

Subspecialty Societies

Subspecialty Certificate	Specialty Society
	<p>(+) Indicates Guidelines Publicly Available (-) Indicates Guidelines Not Publicly Available</p>
Cardiology	<p>American College of Cardiology (ACC) (+) http://www.acc.org</p> <p>Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions (SCAI) (+) https://scai.org/</p>
Clinical Cardiac Electrophysiology	<p>Heart Rhythm SocietySM (HRS) (+) (collaborative with ACC) http://www.hrsonline.org/</p>
Critical Care Medicine	<p>Society of Critical Care Medicine (SCCM) (+) For additional information visit the SCCM website: http://www.sccm.org/Home</p>

Subspecialty Certificate	Specialty Society
	<p>(+) Indicates Guidelines Publicly Available (-) Indicates Guidelines Not Publicly Available</p>
Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism	<p>American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists AACE (+) http://www.aace.com</p> <p>Endocrine Society (-) https://www.endocrine.org/</p>
Gastroenterology	<p>American College of Gastroenterology (ACG) (+) https://gi.org/</p> <p>American Gastroenterological Association (AGA) (+) http://www.gastro.org</p> <p>Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons SAGES (+) https://www.sages.org/</p>
Geriatric Medicine	<p>American Geriatrics Society (AGS) (+) http://www.americangeriatrics.org</p>
Geriatric Psychiatry	<p>American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry (AAGP) (+) http://www.aagponline.org/</p>
Gynecologic Oncology	<p>Society of Gynecologic Oncology (SGO) (+) http://www.sgo.org</p>
Hematology	<p>American Society of Hematology (ASH) (+) http://www.hematology.org</p>
Hospice and Palliative Medicine	<p>American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine (AAHPM) (+) http://www.aahpm.org</p>
Infectious Disease	<p>Infectious Disease Society of America (IDSA) (+) http://www.idsociety.org</p>
Medical Toxicology	<p>American College of Medical Toxicology (+) http://www.acmt.net</p>
Nephrology	<p>American Society of Nephrology (ASN) (-) http://www.asn-online.org</p>
Neuromuscular	<p>American Association of Neuromuscular & Electromyography Medicine (AANEM) (+) http://www.aanem.org/home</p>
Neuroradiology	<p>American Society of Neuroradiology (ASNR) (+) http://www.asnr.org</p>
Oncology	<p>American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO®) (+) http://www.asco.org</p>
Pain Medicine	<p>American Chronic Pain Association (ACPA) (+) https://www.acpanow.com/</p> <p>American Academy of Pain Medicine (AAPM) (+) https://painmed.org/</p>
Pulmonary Disease	<p>American College of Chest Physicians® (ACCP) (+) http://www.chestnet.org</p>
Reproductive Endocrinology/Infertility	<p>American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM) (+) http://www.asrm.org</p>
Rheumatology	<p>American College of Rheumatology (ACR) (+) For additional information visit the ACR website: http://www.rheumatology.org/</p> <p><i>NOTE: Do not confuse with American College of Radiology</i></p>
Sleep Medicine	<p>American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM) (+) http://www.aasmnet.org</p>
Sports Medicine	<p>American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine (AOSSM) (+) http://www.sportsmed.org</p>

Subspecialty Certificate	Specialty Society
	(+) Indicates Guidelines Publicly Available (-) Indicates Guidelines Not Publicly Available
Surgery of the Hand	American Society for Surgery of the Hand (ASSH) (-) https://www.assh.org/
Transplant Hepatology	American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD) (+) http://www.aasld.org
	American Society of Transplantation (AST) (+) https://www.myast.org/
Undersea and Hyperbaric Medicine	Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society (UHMS) (-) https://www.uhms.org/
Vascular and Interventional Radiology	Society of Interventional Radiology (SIR) (+) http://www.sirweb.org
Vascular Surgery	Society for Vascular Surgery (SVS) (+) www.vascularweb.org/

Document History

Status	Date	Action
Reviewed	08/10/2023	Medical Policy & Technology Assessment Committee (MPTAC) review. Updated References section.
Reviewed	08/11/2022	MPTAC review. Updated References section.
Reviewed	08/12/2021	MPTAC review. Updated References section. Updated Physician Specialty table in the general and subspecialty certificates columns and reformatted table with bullets in place of numeric values.
Revised	08/13/2020	MPTAC review. Replaced single quotation marks with double quotation marks, hyphenated the words decision making and placed an asterisk after the comma in the Description/Scope section. Updated References section. Under Physician Specialty Societies' table, added Neurocritical Care, Micrographic Dermatologic Surgery and added Complex to Pediatric Otolaryngology in the Subspecialty Certificate section of the table. Reformatted general and vascular surgery under the General Certificate section of the table.
Reviewed	08/22/2019	MPTAC review. Updated References section.
Reviewed	09/13/2018	MPTAC review. Updated References section.
Reviewed	11/02/2017	MPTAC review. The document header wording updated from "Current Effective Date" to "Publish Date." Checked functionality of specialty and sub-specialty society hyperlinks and updated any societies who have clinical practice guidelines available publicly. Updated References section.
Reviewed	11/03/2016	MPTAC review. Checked functionality of specialty and sub-specialty society hyperlinks and updated any societies who have clinical practice guidelines available publicly.
Revised	11/05/2015	MPTAC review. Added the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology.
Revised	08/06/2015	MPTAC review. Added Subspecialty certificate for Pain Medicine to Emergency Medicine and Family Medicine. Added to specialty society list: Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions (SCAI); American Association of Neuromuscular & Electrodiagnostic Medicine (AANEM); Society for Vascular Surgery (SVS). Updated name for American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.
Revised	08/14/2014	MPTAC review. Clarified Process. Added Subspecialty certificates for Emergency Medicine - Anesthesiology Critical Care Medicine.
Reviewed	08/08/2013	MPTAC review. Added General Certificates for Radiology – Interventional Radiology and Diagnostic Radiology; Medical Physics. Added Subspecialty certificates for Internal Medicine – Adult Congenital Heart Disease; Pathology – Clinical Informatics.
Reviewed	08/09/2012	MPTAC review. Updated Subspecialty Certificate information in Reference section. Updated links.
Reviewed	08/18/2011	MPTAC review. Updated links.
Revised	08/19/2010	MPTAC review. Title changed to "Review of Services for Benefit Determinations in the Absence of a Company Applicable Medical Policy or Clinical Utilization Management (UM) Guideline." Process, Definition, General Certificate and Subspecialty Certificate information updated.
Reviewed	08/27/2009	MPTAC review.
Reviewed	08/28/2008	MPTAC review. Websites reviewed and updated. Addition of the NCCN Drugs & Biologics Compendia™. American College of Sports Medicine removed; replaced with American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine. American Society of Neuroradiology added to specialty society reference. Clinical Immunology Society and Society of Adolescent Medicine removed from specialty society reference.
Revised	02/21/2008	MPTAC review.
Revised	03/08/2007	MPTAC review
Revised	03/26/2006	MPTAC review
New	12/01/2005	MPTAC initial document development.

Applicable to Commercial HMO members in California: When a medical policy states a procedure or treatment is investigational, PMGs should not approve or deny the request. Instead, please fax the request to Anthem Blue Cross Grievance and Appeals at fax # 818-234-2767 or 818-234-3824. For questions, call G&A at 1-800-365-0609 and ask to speak with the Investigational Review Nurse.

Federal and State law, as well as contract language, including definitions and specific contract provisions/exclusions, take precedence over Medical Policy and must be considered first in determining eligibility for coverage. The member's contract benefits in effect on the date that services are rendered must be used. Medical Policy, which addresses medical efficacy, should be considered before utilizing medical opinion in adjudication. Medical technology is constantly evolving, and we reserve the right to review and update Medical Policy periodically.

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