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State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
Department of Health Care Services



Edmond G. Brown Jr
Governor

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N.L.: 08-1215
Index: Benefits
Supplements: NL 02-0411
Supersede: NL 13-1106

TO: ALL COUNTY CALIFORNIA CHILDREN'S SERVICES (CCS) PROGRAM
ADMINISTRATORS, MEDICAL CONSULTANTS AND STATE
CHILDREN'S MEDICAL SERVICES BRANCH AND REGIONAL OFFICE
STAFF

SUBJECT: COCHLEAR IMPLANT BATTERIES AND PARTS

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Numbered Letter (N.L) is to update the policy and benefits delineated in those instructions. Numbered Letters 02-0411, 13-1106, and 12-007 provided policy to the CCS Independent County programs, Regional Offices, and CCS Dependent County programs for authorization of request for cochlear implant (CI) speech processors, batteries and replacement parts.

II. BACKGROUND

In 2007, two (2) CI manufacturers were enlisted by Medi-Cal to provide replacement parts and batteries directly to the patient. However, it is necessary for the Cochlear Implant Centers (CICs) to determine how best to use this delivery option. Because not all of the implant manufacturers are registered as Medi-Cal Durable Medical Equipment (DME) providers, there are circumstances in which the CIC may request the authorization for batteries and replacement parts for their own distribution.

The manufacturers and approved CI providers that can receive authorizations for replacement parts and batteries include:

- Advanced Bionics Corporation, 1841479573
- Cochlear Americas, 1336149426
- UC Davis Medical Center, 1710918545
- Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center, 1902803315
- Children's Hospital Oakland, 1003961251

- Rady's Children's Hospital, 1710065933
- House Ear Institute, 1407981129
- Stanford Cochlear Implant Center, 1871543215
- UCI Medical Center, 1689608150
- UCSF Medical Center, 1457450116

Due to changes in technology and the Healthcare Procedure Coding System (HCPCS), policy and frequency limits have been modified. There may be cases where older technology or more powerful technology requires more batteries or replacement parts; this should be considered adequate justification for additional units requested by the CICs.

III. POLICY

- A. Requests for all CI evaluations and surgeries must be forwarded to the State Audiology Consultant as instructed by N.L. 10-1211 and criteria for the authorization of speech processor upgrades is delineated for county authorization in N.L. 13-1106.
- B. Replacements parts, batteries and speech processor upgrade authorizations must be requested by the CICs. The authorization must be issued to the approved CIC or the CI manufacturer requested by the CIC staff. The Service Code Grouping (SCG) 05 issued to the CICs includes limited batteries for the provider to issue with the appointment. Therefore, it may be necessary for authorizations to be issued to both the CIC and the manufacturer, as long as the total number of units does not exceed the benefits listed below, or if justification for the additional parts and batteries is included with the request.
- C. L8619 (external speech processor and controller, integrated system), L8627 (external speech processor, replacement) and L8628 (external controller component, replacement), may be authorized at the request of the CIC to either the Center or the manufacturer if the component is lost, irreparably damaged beyond the useful lifetime of 5 years, or accompanied with medical justification. See N.L. 13-1106 for clarification regarding replacement criteria. The approved component may be added to a current authorization for CI replacement parts and batteries, or can be requested as a separate authorization.
- D. Frequency limitations will be implemented on the Service Authorization Request (SAR) and may be renewed annually at the time of the new program eligibility date. Frequency limitations below are based on one unilateral cochlear implantation and should be doubled for bilateral cochlear implantation.

Additional parts beyond the frequency limitations require medical justification from the CIC providing post-surgical care. Additional units may not be authorized based on a request from the parents, guardians, or the CI manufacturer. The Cochlear Implant Replacement Parts and Batteries Request Form delineate the number of parts that should be authorized for each Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) code.

- E. Requests, repairs (L7510) and unlisted replacement parts (L9900) beyond the annual \$400 maximum allowable rate will require a request initiated by the Cochlear Implant Center of Excellence. The repair or additional units of the unlisted replacement parts can be added to a current authorization for CI replacement parts and batteries, or can be approved as a separate authorization.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

- A. The CIC will submit the Established CCS Program/GHPP Client SAR and/or the *Cochlear Implant Replacement Parts and Batteries Request Form*, indicating the HCPCS codes and units in Requested Services and, if using the CI manufacturer, the name and the National Provider Identifier (NPI) of the manufacturer in box 30 of the SAR. The number of units requested should not exceed the frequency limitation units indicated on the *Cochlear Implant Replacement Parts and Batteries Request Form*, unless medical justification has been provided (i.e., older technology, higher battery drain).
- B. The authorization for the batteries may be a combination of 300 disposable (L8621/L8622) and two (2) rechargeable (L8623/L8624), per implant, if requested by the CICs.
- C. The authorization should remain a "97" SAR, with the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) box unchecked on the SAR, regardless of program eligibility. **No modifiers should be used with any "L" codes for CI replacement parts and batteries.**

The Children's Medical Services (CMS) Branch will continue to monitor developments in CI technology and will update criteria for the authorization of implant technology and services as appropriate.

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Should you have any questions regarding the authorization of CI services, please contact the Hearing and Audiology Services Unit at (916) 327-3095.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY ROBERT J. DIMAND

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