

FAQs About Clarification on Prior Authorization for Orthodontic Treatment

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Since February 2025, ForwardHealth has encouraged providers to use Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) procedure code D8680 (Orthodontic retention [removal of appliances, construction and placement of retainer(s)]) on claims for members when appliances are removed, and retainers have been delivered. Previously, providers also used HCPCS procedure code D8670 (Periodic orthodontic treatment visit) when a member's orthodontic treatment ended.

These FAQs explain the differences between these two HCPCS codes and how to best use them.

Question: What is the difference between HCPCS codes D8670 and D8680?

Answer: D8670 is used for ongoing orthodontic treatment and **may be used multiple times**. D8680 is used when the appliances are removed, and the retainers are placed. It's typically used **only once** per phase of treatment.

Question: If I have a member who is actively in orthodontic care, can I request to add D8680?

Answer: Yes, you can request this.

Question: I just finished orthodontic treatment for a member and did not have D8680 prior authorized. Can I still claim it?

Answer: In most cases, no. Prior authorizations (PAs) can only be backdated for up to 14 days. If it's been less than 14 days since the treatment ended, you can submit a backdated PA request. If it's been longer than 14 days, the PA can't be backdated. ForwardHealth can't pay claims for D8680 without an approved PA.

Question: Can I bill both D8670 and D8680 on the same day?

Answer: No, codes D8670 and D8680 should not be billed on the same day. D8670 is for ongoing treatment, and D8680 is for appliance removal.

Question: I am submitting a new PA request for orthodontic treatment. Will D8680 be automatically added to my PA request?

Answer: No. You will need to add D8680 to all new PA requests for orthodontic treatment.

Question: Is there anything I should know before putting HCPCS code D8680 on a claim?

Answer: You will need an active PA that includes D8680 before submitting a claim with this code. You should also ensure that services were provided within 365 days of submitting the claim.

Question: I submitted a PA request recently but didn't use code D8680. Will this be automatically amended to include code D8680?

Answer: No. You will need to submit a PA amendment request adding D8680 to the approved PA for a member who is actively undergoing orthodontic care.

Question: If I didn't submit a PA request for D8680, should I amend my initial PA request or do I need to send in a new PA request?

Answer: If the initial PA is still active, you can submit an amendment. Otherwise, you can submit a new PA request with D8680.

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Question: When should I request PA for procedure code D8680 for members undergoing orthodontic treatment?

Answer: ForwardHealth encourages providers to include D8680 in their initial PA request. However, if you did not include D8680 in your initial PA request, you may do either of these:

- Amend the current PA request.
- Submit a new PA request with D8680 at least two months prior to the removal of appliances.

Question: Will my PA requests for D8680 always be approved?

Answer: No. ForwardHealth reviews and approves or denies each PA request individually.

Question: Do I have to use D8680 on my PA requests?

Answer: No. ForwardHealth encourages providers to use code D8680 to better understand where members are in their orthodontic treatment, but you are not required to use this code.

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