

Affected Programs: BadgerCare Plus Standard Plan, BadgerCare Plus Benchmark Plan, Medicaid

To: Ambulatory Surgery Centers, Audiologists, Federally Qualified Health Centers, Hearing Instrument Specialists, Home Health Agencies, Individual Medical Supply Providers, Medical Equipment Vendors, Hospital Providers, Pharmacies, Physical Therapists, Physician Clinics, Physicians, Rehabilitation Agencies, Speech-Language Pathologists, Speech and Hearing Clinics, Therapy Groups, HMOs and Other Managed Care Programs

Policy Changes for Bone-anchored Hearing Aids

This *ForwardHealth Update* introduces new prior authorization (PA) guidelines for bone-anchored hearing aids and introduces a new procedure code for bone-anchored hearing aids that do not require surgery. Clinical criteria described in this *Update* apply to PA requests received by ForwardHealth on and after June 1, 2012.

This *ForwardHealth Update* introduces new prior authorization (PA) guidelines for bone-anchored hearing aids and introduces a new procedure code for bone-anchored hearing aids that do not require surgery. Clinical criteria described in this *Update* apply to PA requests received by ForwardHealth on and after June 1, 2012.

Bone-anchored hearing aids and surgeries are covered under:

- The BadgerCare Plus Standard Plan.
- The BadgerCare Plus Benchmark Plan for members 17 years of age and younger.
- Wisconsin Medicaid.

Bone-anchored hearing aids are not covered under:

- The BadgerCare Plus Core Plan.
- The BadgerCare Plus Basic Plan.
- The Benchmark Plan for members 18 years of age and older.

Requirements for the Rendering Surgeon for Bone-Anchored Hearing Aid Implant Surgeries

The rendering surgeon is required to obtain PA from ForwardHealth for bone-anchored hearing aid implant surgeries. ForwardHealth will deny claims for services and equipment relating to the surgery unless there is an approved PA on file from the rendering surgeon for the surgery.

When submitting a PA requests to ForwardHealth for bone-anchored hearing aid implant surgery, the rendering surgeon is required to submit a completed Prior Authorization Request Form (PA/RF), F-11018 (10/08), Prior Authorization/Physician Attachment (PA/PA), F-11016 (10/08), and Prior Authorization Request for Hearing Instrument and Audiological Services (PA/HIAS2), F-11021 (10/08).

Prior Authorization Approval Criteria for Unilateral Bone-Anchored Hearing Aid Implant Surgeries

The following criteria must be met for PA requests to be approved for unilateral bone-anchored hearing aid implant surgeries:

- The member is 5 years of age or older at the time of surgery.
- The member has sufficient bone volume and bone quality to support successful fixture placement as

determined by the surgeon *and* the surgeon determines that the implant can safely be done in a one-step procedure.

- The member has a conductive and/or mixed hearing loss (unilateral or bilateral) with pure-tone average bone-conduction thresholds (measured at 0.5, 1, 2, and 3 kHz) less than or equal to 65 dB HL. The threshold range is intended to accommodate different degrees of hearing loss and corresponding output power of the bone-anchored hearing aid unit.
- The member demonstrates an air-bone gap of at least 30 dB in the proposed implant ear.
- The member demonstrates a word recognition score greater than 60 percent via conventional air-conduction speech audiometry using single-syllable words.
- The member has one or more of the following conditions:
 - ✓ Severe chronic external otitis or otitis media.
 - ✓ Chronic draining ear through a tympanic membrane perforation.
 - ✓ Malformation of the external auditory canal or middle ear.
 - ✓ Stenosis of the external auditory canal.
 - ✓ Ossicular discontinuity or erosion that cannot be repaired.
 - ✓ Chronic dermatologic conditions such as psoriasis of the ear canal.
 - ✓ Tumors of the external canal and/or tympanic cavity.
 - ✓ Other conditions in which an air-conduction hearing aid is contraindicated for the ear to be implanted, or where the condition prevents restoration of hearing using a conventional air-conduction hearing aid.

As a reminder, the ear to be implanted must be specified on the PA/PA form.

Prior Authorization Criteria for Bilateral Bone-Anchored Hearing Aid Implant Surgeries

The following criteria must be met for PA requests to be approved for bilateral bone-anchored hearing aid implant surgeries:

- The member meets the Unilateral Bone-anchored Hearing Aid criteria noted above for both ears and has symmetrical bone-conduction thresholds between ears. Symmetrical bone-conduction thresholds are defined as less than a 10 dB average difference between ears (measured at 0.5, 1, 2, and 3 kHz), *or* less than a 15 dB difference at individual frequencies.
- The member presents lifestyle needs that justify the need for binaural hearing via bone conduction.

Prior Authorization Criteria for Bone-Anchored Hearing Aid Implant Surgeries for Profound Unilateral Sensorineural Hearing Loss with Normal Hearing in the Opposite Ear

Profound unilateral sensorineural hearing loss with normal hearing in the opposite ear is sometimes referred to as unilateral sensorineural deafness or single sided deafness.

The following criteria must be met for PA requests to be approved for bone-anchored hearing aid implant surgeries for profound unilateral sensorineural hearing loss:

- The member has normal hearing in one ear, defined as a pure-tone average air-conduction threshold measured at 0.5, 1, 2, and 3 kHz of 20 dB HL or better.
- The member has average air-conduction thresholds measured at 0.5, 1, 2, and 3 kHz in the ear with the sensorineural hearing loss of 90 dB HL or poorer.
- The member is 5 years of age or older at the time of surgery.
- The member has sufficient bone volume and bone quality to support successful fixture placement as determined by the surgeon *and* the surgeon determines that the implant can safely be done in a one-step procedure.

- The member is mature enough and otherwise able to give accurate feedback on the effectiveness of the intervention during a trial period.

Requesting Prior Authorization for Bone-Anchored Hearing Aids That Do Not Require Surgery

Bone-anchored hearing aids that use a processor and headband (rather than a surgically implanted device) require PA. When submitting a PA request for bone-anchored hearing aids that use a processor and headband, providers are required to submit the Prior Authorization Request for Hearing Instrument and Audiological Services (PA/HIAS1), F-11020 (10/08), and PA/HIAS2. Approval for a bone-anchored hearing aid that uses a processor and headband requires that the provider adhere to the criteria noted previously for unilateral bone-anchored hearing aid implant surgeries minus the surgically related criteria. The ear receiving the bone-conduction device must be specified.

New Procedure Code for Bone-anchored Hearing Aids That Do Not Require Surgery

Effective for dates of service on and after June 1, 2012, Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) procedure code L8692 (Auditory osseointegrated device, external sound processor, used without osseointegration, body worn, includes head band or other means of external attachment) must be indicated on PAs and claims for bone-anchored hearing aids that use a processor and headband. Prior authorization requests and claims submitted for bone-anchored hearing aids that use a processor and headband with HCPCS procedure code V5298 (Hearing aid, not otherwise classified) will be denied.

Information Regarding Managed Care Organizations

This *Update* contains fee-for-service policy and applies to services members receive on a fee-for-service basis only. For managed care policy, contact the appropriate managed care organization. Managed care organizations are required to provide at least the same benefits as those provided under fee-for-service arrangements.

The *ForwardHealth Update* is the first source of program policy and billing information for providers.

Wisconsin Medicaid, BadgerCare Plus, SeniorCare, and Wisconsin Chronic Disease Program are administered by the Division of Health Care Access and Accountability, Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS). The Wisconsin Well Woman Program is administered by the Division of Public Health, Wisconsin DHS.

For questions, call Provider Services at (800) 947-9627 or visit our Web site at www.forwardhealth.wi.gov/.

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This Update was issued on 05/14/2012 and information contained in this Update was incorporated into the Online Handbook on 08/03/2012.