Pulse Oximeter for Children

Policy Number:        Original Effective Date:
MM.01.011         03/14/2006
Line(s) of Business:        Current Effective Date:
HMO; PPO; QUEST  11/22/2013
Section: DME
Place(s) of Service: Home

I. Description
A pulse oximeter is a device that determines the oxygen saturation of the patient’s blood using a sensor attached to a finger, toe or earlobe. It may include a recording device and an audio alarm for saturation levels below a pre-set limit.

II. Criteria/Guidelines
A. Home pulse oximeters are covered (subject to Limitations/Exclusions and Administrative Guidelines) when the child has one of the following conditions:
   1. Chronic lung disease that requires supplemental oxygen to maintain an oxygen saturation of greater than 90 percent; or
   2. Cardiovascular disease that requires oxygen to maintain oxygen saturation of greater than 90 percent; or
   3. Primary pulmonary hypertension
B. Requests for extension of therapy require precertification, reassessment of the patient and documentation from the medical record of ongoing oxygen needs.

III. Limitations/Exclusions
A. Use of a pulse oximeter for the following conditions does not meet payment determination criteria and will not be covered by HMSA:
   1. **Asthma:** Using a pulse oximeter for monitoring oxygen saturation in asthmatics is not recommended according to the National Institutes of Health. There have been no studies that demonstrate that pulse oximetry is a sufficiently valid monitoring system during acute asthma exacerbations.
   2. **Obstructive sleep apnea:** The sensitivity and negative predictive value of pulse oximetry is not adequate to rule out obstructive sleep apnea in patients with mild to moderate symptoms. A polysomnogram is required to confirm or exclude the diagnosis of obstructive sleep apnea, regardless of the results of pulse oximetry screening.
IV. Administrative Guidelines

A. Precertification is required. To precertify, please complete HMSA’s Precertification Request form and mail or fax the form as indicated.

B. Precertification will be given for three months. Documentation must include:
   1. Age of the patient
   2. Patient’s condition (including pertinent ICD-9 codes)
   3. Caregiver training in the use of the pulse oximeter
   4. A prescribed response plan to changes in saturation (e.g., increase/decrease oxygen flow rate, additional chest PT/suctioning, inhalation treatment, check temperature, call physician, take patient to ER, etc.).
   5. O2 saturation levels and patient treatment plan including a hospital discharge summary and respiratory therapy assessment. The documentation must show that the patient becomes hypoxic with oxygen saturation levels less than 90 percent.

C. Requests for extension of therapy require precertification, reassessment of the patient and documentation from the medical record of ongoing oxygen needs.

D. Payments for pulse oximeters will be capped at 15 months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HCPCS Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E0445</td>
<td>Oximeter device for measuring blood oxygen levels non-invasively</td>
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<tr>
<td>A4606</td>
<td>Oxygen probe for use with oximeter device, replacement</td>
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V. Important Reminder

The purpose of this Medical Policy is to provide a guide to coverage. This Medical Policy is not intended to dictate to providers how to practice medicine. Nothing in this Medical Policy is intended to discourage or prohibit providing other medical advice or treatment deemed appropriate by the treating physician.

Benefit determinations are subject to applicable member contract language. To the extent there are any conflicts between these guidelines and the contract language, the contract language will control.

This Medical Policy has been developed through consideration of the medical necessity criteria under Hawaii’s Patients’ Bill of Rights and Responsibilities Act (Hawaii Revised Statutes §432E-1.4), generally accepted standards of medical practice and review of medical literature and government approval status. HMSA has determined that services not covered under this Medical Policy will not be medically necessary under Hawaii law in most cases. If a treating physician disagrees with HMSA’s determination as to medical necessity in a given case, the physician may request that HMSA reconsider the application of the medical necessity criteria to the case at issue in light of any supporting documentation.
VI. References


