

Clinical Policy: Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment Benefit for Pediatric Members

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Line of Business: Medicaid

[Revision Log](#)

See **Important Reminder** at the end of this policy for important regulatory and legal information.

Description

Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) is the Medicaid program's benefit for low-income infants, children and adolescents, which provides a comprehensive array of prevention, diagnostic, and treatment services as specified in Section 1905(r) of the Social Security Act. The EPSDT benefit is more robust than the Medicaid benefit for adults and is designed to assure that children receive early detection and care, so that health problems are averted or diagnosed and treated as early as possible.

This prior authorization policy provides coverage guidelines for medication requests through the EPSDT benefit and should be used in conjunction with the drug-specific or general medical necessity policy.*

**When available, drug-specific policies supersede general medical necessity policies. If no drug-specific policies exist for the requested agent, refer to ERX.PA.01.*

FDA Approved Indication(s)

Refer to the prescribing information for the requested agent.

Policy/Criteria

Provider must submit documentation (such as office chart notes, lab results or other clinical information) supporting that member has met all approval criteria.

Health plan approved formularies should be reviewed for all coverage determinations. Requirements to use preferred alternative agents apply only when such requirements align with the health plan approved formulary.

It is the policy of health plans affiliated with Envolve Pharmacy Solutions[™] that the requested agent is **medically necessary** when the following criteria are met:

I. Initial Approval Criteria

A. Medication Request Through EPSDT Benefit (must meet all):

1. Age < 21 years or the state-specific maximum age for coverage under the EPSDT benefit, whichever is lower;
2. Member meets one of the following (a or b):
 - a. The initial approval criteria in the drug-specific or general medical necessity policy are met;
When available, drug-specific policies supersede general medical necessity policies. If no drug-specific policies exist for the requested agent, refer to ERX.PA.01
 - b. All of the following (i, ii, and iii):
 - i. The requested agent fits within any of the following categories of Medicaid-covered services listed in Section 1905(a) and/or 1905(r) of the Social Security Act:
 - 1) Immunization in accordance with the schedule for pediatric vaccines established by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices;
 - 2) Dental care needed for relief of pain, infection, restoration of teeth, or maintenance of dental health;
 - 3) Emergency, preventive, or therapeutic treatment for dental disease that, if left untreated, may become acute dental problems or cause irreversible damage to the teeth or supporting structures;

- 4) Treatment for defects in vision;
 - 5) Treatment for defects in hearing;
 - 6) Treatment for tobacco cessation for a pregnant woman;
Requested agent must be recommended for pregnant women by the Public Health Service guidelines on treating tobacco use or recognized as effective by the Secretary of Health and Human Services
 - 7) Preventive treatment assigned a grade of A or B by the United States Preventive Services Task Force:
<https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Name/uspstf-a-and-b-recommendations>;
 - 8) Treatment of a mental health or substance use condition, including medication-assisted treatment for opioid-use disorders;
 - 9) Primary or secondary treatment for sickle cell disease in members who have had a stroke or are at high risk of stroke, including deferoxamine chelation in members receiving chronic blood transfusions;
 - 10) Medically necessary treatment to correct or ameliorate the member's physical or mental condition (*provider must submit supporting documentation*);
- ii. Failure of formulary alternatives if required in the drug-specific or general medical necessity policy, unless clinically significant adverse effects are experienced, all are contraindicated, or none are available;
When available, drug-specific policies supersede general medical necessity policies. If no drug-specific policies exist for the requested agent, refer to ERX.PA.01
 - iii. The requested agent and prescribed dose are not considered experimental or investigational for the member's diagnosis and age.

Approval duration: Duration allowed in the drug-specific or general medical necessity policy or 6 months

II. Continued Therapy

A. Medication Request Through EPSDT Benefit (must meet all):

1. Member meets one of the following (a or b):
 - a. Currently receiving medication via a health plan affiliated with Envolve Pharmacy Solutions or member has previously met initial approval criteria;
 - b. The continued therapy criteria in the drug-specific or general medical necessity policy are met;
When available, drug-specific policies supersede general medical necessity policies. If no drug-specific policies exist for the requested agent, refer to ERX.PA.01
2. Member is responding positively to therapy;
3. If request is for a dose increase, the prescribed dose is not considered experimental or investigational for the member's diagnosis and age.

Approval duration: Duration allowed in the drug-specific or general medical necessity policy or 12 months

III. Diagnoses/Indications for which coverage is NOT authorized: Not applicable

IV. Appendices/General Information

Appendix A: Abbreviation/Acronym Key

EPSDT: early and periodic screening, diagnostic and treatment

FDA: Food and Drug Administration

Appendix B: Therapeutic Alternatives

Refer to the drug-specific or general medical necessity policy.*

*When available, drug-specific policies supersede general medical necessity policies. If no drug-specific policies exist for the requested agent, refer to ERX.PA.01

Appendix C: Contraindications/Boxed Warnings

Refer to the prescribing information for the requested agent.

Appendix D: General Information

- Medicaid EPSDT website: <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/benefits/early-and-periodic-screening-diagnostic-and-treatment/index.html>
- Age for EPSDT benefit eligibility: under the age of 21, or, at the option of the state, under the age of 20, 19, or 18 as the state may choose.¹
- EPSDT benefit coverage under Section 1905(r)(5) of the Social Security Act includes “Such other necessary health care, diagnostic services, treatment, and other measures described in Section 1905(a) to correct or ameliorate defects and physical and mental illnesses and conditions discovered by the screening services, whether or not such services are covered under the State plan.”¹
 - A service need not cure a condition in order to be covered under EPSDT.²
 - Services that maintain or improve the child’s current health condition are also covered in EPSDT because they “ameliorate” a condition. Maintenance services are defined as services that sustain or support rather than those that cure or improve health problems. Services are covered when they prevent a condition from worsening or prevent development of additional health problems.²
- A state may consider the relative cost effectiveness of alternatives as part of the prior authorization process. States may cover services in the most cost effective mode as long as the less expensive service is equally effective and actually available.²
- EPSDT does not require coverage of treatments that are experimental or investigational. Neither the Federal Medicaid statute nor the regulations define what constitutes an experimental treatment. The state’s determination of whether a service is experimental must be reasonable and should be based on the latest scientific information available. Medicare guidance on whether a service is experimental or investigational is not determinative of the issue and may not be relevant to the pediatric population.²

V. Dosage and Administration

Refer to the prescribing information for the requested agent.

VI. Product Availability

Refer to the prescribing information for the requested agent.

VII. References

1. Social Security Act, Section 1905. Available at: https://www.ssa.gov/OP_Home/ssact/title19/1905.htm. Accessed March 9, 2020.
2. EPSDT Coverage Guide. Published June 2014. Available at: https://www.medicaid.gov/sites/default/files/2019-12/epsdt_coverage_guide.pdf. Accessed March 9, 2020.

Reviews, Revisions, and Approvals	Date	P&T Approval Date
Policy created	03.23.20	05.20

Important Reminder

This clinical policy has been developed by appropriately experienced and licensed health care professionals based on a review and consideration of currently available generally accepted standards of medical practice; peer-reviewed medical literature; government agency/program approval status; evidence-based guidelines and positions of leading national health professional organizations; views of physicians practicing in relevant clinical areas affected by this clinical policy; and other available clinical information.

This Clinical Policy is not intended to dictate to providers how to practice medicine, nor does it constitute a contract or guarantee regarding payment or results. Providers are expected to exercise professional medical judgment in providing the most appropriate care, and are solely responsible for the medical advice and treatment of members.

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