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Department of Health Care Services Children's Medical Services Network (CMS Net) - Information Bulletin #250

Cochlear Implant Replacement Parts and Batteries Updated Instructions

In September 2007, two cochlear implant manufacturers became authorized Medi-Cal Durable Medical Equipment (DME) providers in order to provide replacement parts and batteries directly to beneficiaries. In October 2007, CCS Numbered Letter 12-1007 delineated CCS policy regarding the authorization of the HCPCS codes. However, due to conflicting priorities and the National Provider Identifier (NPI) conversion, the system instructions for implementation were not published until January 2008.

Service Authorization Requests (SARs) can now be issued to Advanced Bionics and Cochlear America for the following codes:

L8615: Headset/headpiece for use with cochlear implant device, replacement, 2 per year
L8616: Microphone for use with cochlear implant device, replacement, 2 per year
L8617: Transmitting coil for use with cochlear implant device, replacement, 2 per year
L8618: Transmitter cable for use with cochlear implant device, replacement, 8 per year
L8623: Lithium ION battery for use with cochlear implant device speech processor, other than ear level, replacement, each, 4 per year
L8624: Lithium ION battery for use with cochlear implant device speech processor, ear level, replacement, each, 4 per year
L7510: Repair of prosthetic device, repair or replace minor parts.

SARs issued to the DME providers will continue to be requested by the Medi-Cal Cochlear Implant Center of Excellence managing the case. The SAR should be distributed to the Cochlear Implant Center by adding the center name and address in the "Add Distribution" option.

HCPCS codes L9900 (miscellaneous parts), L8621 (Zinc air batteries), and L8622 (Alkaline batteries) have not yet been implemented. Requests for those codes should be date-stamped and filed for timeliness in order to ensure accurate payment retroactive to October 1, 2007. The request should also be noted in the narrative of the SAR. Claims should also be submitted for documentation of timeliness. Claims for the HCPCS codes listed above must be received by July 15, 2008, in order for timeliness to be overridden.

HCPCS codes L8615, L8616, L8617, L8618, L8623, and L8624 can also be authorized to Outpatient Hospital Departments; L7510 at this point can only be authorized to the cochlear implant manufacturers listed above, and physicians. The claim for L7510 should include in the Remarks section "not a limb prosthesis repair."

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House Ear Institute can now be authorized and submit claims for L8619, the replacement speech processor. Requests should be authorized to the NPI of the requesting audiologist, and the claim should be issued using the NPI of House Ear Institute.

Please note that NO MODIFIERS should be used for any of the HCPCS codes listed above.

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