

**Medical Policy
Speech Generating Devices**

Document Number: 037

	Commercial and Connector/ Qualified Health Plans	MassHealth
Authorization required	X	X
No Prior Authorization		
Not covered		

Overview

The purpose of this document is to describe the guidelines AllWays Health Partners utilizes to determine the medical necessity for speech generating devices (also referred to as augmentative and alternative communication devices) and its associated software for members with severe expressive communication impairments.

AllWays Health Partners does not compensate for devices, accessories or software programs that are not the least intensive level of services.

Coverage Guidelines

Medical necessity for speech generating devices is determined through McKesson’s InterQual® criteria. To access the criteria, log in to AllWays Health Partners’ provider website at allwaysprovider.org and click the InterQual® Criteria Lookup link under the Resources Menu.

Exclusions

1. The requirements for coverage have not been met.
2. The member fails to demonstrate during the training schedule or at any subsequent time the ability to learn to use the device or software functionally for communication.
3. The member demonstrates during the training schedule significant behaviors such as physical aggression or property destruction.
4. Replacements for devices damaged/lost due to neglect.
5. Replacement requests less than three years from receipt of the initial device unless documentation supports irreparable damage that is not a result of property destruction or neglect by the member.
6. Upgrade requests less than three years from receipt of the initial device.
7. Upgrade requests that do not clearly identify functional benefit from existing device.
8. Duplicate devices or software, including accessories for mounting.
9. Charges for web, cellular, or other device connectivity, home modifications, and technical support.
10. Voice amplifiers for members with speech volume or intelligibility due to vocal strain.
11. Tracheoesophageal voice prostheses.
12. Altered auditory feedback devices for the treatment of stuttering.

Definitions

Speech Generating Device (SGD): Speech generating devices are defined as durable medical equipment that provides an individual who has severe speech impairment with the ability to meet his or her functional, speaking needs. SGDs are speech aids consisting of devices or software that generate speech and are used solely by the individual who has severe speech impairment.

Speech Generating Software: Software that enables a desk or laptop computer, a tablet, or personal digital assistant (PDA) to function as an SGD.

CPT/HCPC Codes

Authorized CPT/HCPCS Codes	Code Description
E1399	iPads and tablets configured as speech generating devices (MassHealth members only)
E2500	Speech generating device, digitized speech, using prerecorded messages, less than or equal to 8 minutes recording time
E2502	Speech generating device, digitized speech, using prerecorded messages, greater than 8 minutes but less than or equal to 20 minutes recording time
E2504	Speech generating device, digitized speech, using prerecorded messages, greater than 20 minutes but less than or equal to 40 minutes recording time
E2506	Speech generating device, digitized speech, using prerecorded messages, greater than 40 minutes recording time
E2508	Speech generating device, synthesized speech, requiring message formulation by spelling and access by physical contact with the device
E2510	Speech generating device, synthesized speech, permitting multiple methods of message formulation and multiple methods of device access

Effective

September 2018: Annual update. Revised code E1399 to indicate if criteria is met, the code applies for MassHealth members only.

December 2017: Effective Date.

References

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Speech-Language Pathology Medical Review Guidelines

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Basic Information About Augmentative and Alternative Communication. Rockville: American Speech-Language-Hearing Association; 2015. Available from: <http://www.asha.org/NJC/faqs-aac-basics.htm>



Drager K, Reichle J, Pinkoski C. Synthesized Speech Output and Children: A scoping review. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology* 2010;259-273. doi:10.1044/1058-0360(2010/09-0024)

Lorah E, Parnell A, Whitby P, et al. A Systematic Review of Tablet Computers and Portable Media Players as Speech Generating Devices for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder. *J of Autism Dev Disorder* 2015;45(12):3792-804

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