

Corporate Medical Policy

Immunization Guidelines

File Name: immunization_guidelines
Origination: 01/2000
Last Review: 9/2011
Next Review: 9/2012

Description of Procedure or Service

Immunization is the process of protecting susceptible individuals from communicable diseases by administration of a living modified agent, a suspension of killed organisms, or an inactivated toxin. Immunization is accomplished through various techniques, most commonly by vaccination. Vaccines against microorganisms that cause disease prepares the body's immune system to enable it to fight off or prevent infection.

Policy

Immunization services are allowed in accordance with the Preventive Care Guidelines found on the BlueCross Blue Shield of North Carolina internet site (www.bcbsnc.com) and the member's certificate benefits.

Benefits Application

This medical policy relates only to the services or supplies described herein. Please refer to the Member's Benefit Booklet for availability of benefits. Member's benefits may vary according to benefit design; therefore member benefit language should be reviewed before applying the terms of this medical policy.

Claims Review of Immunization Services

Immunizations are covered when the certificate includes benefits for immunizations.

Unless specifically excluded by a member's contract BCBSNC will allow coverage for new vaccines formally recommended by any of the following: the U.S. Preventative Services Task Force; the American Academy of Pediatrics; and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

Policy Guidelines

If a significantly separately identifiable evaluation and management service is provided at the time of vaccine administration, the evaluation and management service should be reported in addition to the vaccine and toxoid procedure.

Separate reimbursement will be allowed for preventive medicine services 99381-99397.

Separate reimbursement will be allowed for the administration of the vaccines codes (90465 - 90474).

Billing/Coding/Physician Documentation Information

This policy may apply to the following codes. Inclusion of a code in this section does not guarantee that it will be reimbursed. For further information on reimbursement guidelines, please see Administrative

Immunization Guidelines

Policies on the Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina web site at www.bcbsnc.com. They are listed in the Category Search on the Medical Policy search page.

Applicable Codes: 90460-90749, G0008, G0009, G0010, G9141, G9142, Q2035-Q2039

Codes 90460 and 90461 must be reported in addition to the vaccine and toxoid codes 90476-90749. Report codes 90460-90461 only when the physician or qualified health care professional provides face-to-face counseling of the patient and family during the administration of a vaccine. For immunization administration of any vaccine that is not accompanied by face-to-face physician or qualified health care professional counseling to the patient/family for administration of vaccines to patients over 18 years of age, report codes 90471-90474.

*Codes 90476-90748 identify the vaccine product **only**. To report the administration of a vaccine/toxoid, the vaccine product code must be used in addition to the administration code 90460-90474. Modifier 51 should **not** be reported for the vaccines/toxoids when performed with these administration procedures.*

Each immunization given must be filed on a single line of the CMS 1500 claim form, with its specific CPT code.

The -25 modifier must be used with all evaluation and management services except preventive services CPT 99381-99397, when reporting a significant, separately identifiable service in addition to the immunization services.

It is inappropriate to use the unlisted vaccine code CPT 90749 to report immunization administration services.

The invoice from the laboratory or pharmacy the vaccine has been purchased from may be requested for claim review.

BCBSNC HMO, POS, PPO and CMM Products:

Submit state-supplied vaccines with the immunization code and a 'zero' charge amount. Claims for vaccines that are not supplied by the state should indicate the cost of the vaccine.

Submit state-supplied vaccines with the immunization code affixed with the -52 modifier.

Blue Card Host and FEP Products:

Submit state supplied vaccines with the immunization code affixed with the -52 modifier.

BCBSNC may request medical records for determination of medical necessity. When medical records are requested, letters of support and/or explanation are often useful, but are not sufficient documentation unless all specific information needed to make a medical necessity determination is included.

Scientific Background and Reference Sources

Medical Policy Advisory Group - 9/2001

Medical Policy Advisory Group - 10/2003

Medical Policy Advisory Group - 03/10/2005

Medical Policy Advisory Group - 03/24/2006

Medical Director review – 9/2011

Policy Implementation/Update Information

1/00 Implementation

Immunization Guidelines

- 3/00 Removed reference to Blue Edge
- 4/01 Reference to archived medical policy Preventive Health Services changed to the Preventive Care Guidelines on the website. Policy reformatted.
- 6/01 Code range added to coding section.
- 9/01 Medical Policy Advisory Group review. No change to policy.
- 10/03 Biannual review of policy completed. Medical Policy Advisory Group review. Reformatted to provide additional information on immunizations.
- 1/06/05 These are the first quarter 2005 CPT codes: 90465, 90466, 90467, 90468 and 90656. Removed references to Medpoint and PCP as they no longer are applicable to this policy.
- 04/07/05 Medical Policy Advisory Group reviewed policy on 03/10/2005. Changed the code range to include the first quarter codes.
- 7/7/05 New code 90714 effective 07/01/2005.
- 5/08/06 Medical Policy Advisory Group review 3/24/06. No change to policy criteria. Policy number added to the Key Words Section.
- 9/10/07 Revised the wording in the “Billing/Coding/Physician Documentation” section to coincide with the Provider Bluebook language. Medical Policy reviewed by Senior Medical Director of Provider Partnerships, Medical and Reimbursement Policy.
- 12/3/07 Under the section titled, “Claim Review of Immunization Services “, added Unless specifically excluded by a member’s contract BCBSNC will allow coverage for new vaccines formally recommended by any of the following: the U.S. Preventative Services Task Force; the American Academy of Pediatrics; and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. “Under the section titled, “Policy Guidelines” added “Separate reimbursement will be allowed for the administration of the vaccines codes (90465 - 90474).
- 10/06/08 Removed the following, “Participating Primary Care Physicians are encouraged to participate in the State of North Carolina Immunization Program, which reimburses serum cost for specific immunizations.” from the Policy Guidelines. Policy reviewed 09/10/2008, by Vice President and Senior Medical Director of Provider Partnerships, Medical and Reimbursement Policy.
- 6/22/10 Policy Number(s) removed (amw)
- 1/4/11 Added new CPT codes 90460, 90461, 90654. Added new HCPCS codes Q2035- Q2039. (lpr)
- 10/25/11 Revised description. Added the following codes to the Billing/Coding section: *G0008*, *G0009*, *G0010*, *G9141*, *G9142*. Information regarding appropriate coding of administration of vaccines also added to Billing/Coding section. (adn)

Medical policy is not an authorization, certification, explanation of benefits or a contract. Benefits and eligibility are determined before medical guidelines and payment guidelines are applied. Benefits are determined by the group contract and subscriber certificate that is in effect at the time services are rendered. This document is solely provided for informational purposes only and is based on research of current medical literature and review of common medical practices in the treatment and diagnosis of disease. Medical practices and knowledge are constantly changing and BCBSNC reserves the right to review and revise its medical policies periodically.