



## Corporate Medical Policy

### Infusion Therapy in the Home

**File Name:** infusion\_therapy\_in\_the\_home  
**Policy Number:** DME0100  
**Origination:** 3/1998  
**Last Review:** 8/2008  
**Next Review:** 8/2010

#### Description of Procedure or Service

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Home infusion therapy is the administration of Prescription Legend Drugs through [intravenous](#), [intra-spinal](#), [epidural](#), or [subcutaneous](#) routes, under a plan prescribed by a Doctor and determined by the Plan to be Medically Necessary, which are supervised by a licensed Registered Nurse (RN) or Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) to a member in a place of temporary or permanent residence that is used as their home, excluding a hospital, skilled nursing facility, clinic settings, infusion suites and/or physician offices.

Home infusion therapy includes all of the components related to such therapy, such as, but not limited to, nursing services, [durable medical equipment](#), supplies, Prescription and non-Prescription Legend Drugs and solutions, pharmacy compounding and dispensing, specimen collection, patient and family education, delivery of drugs and supplies, and management of emergencies arising from said therapy.

Home infusion drugs are often not readily available through standard pharmacies and are frequently high cost. Most are obtained through hospital pharmacies, licensed home infusion agencies, or mail-order discount drug supply companies which can express deliver the drugs directly to the patient's home.

#### Policy

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**BCBSNC will provide coverage for Home Infusion Therapy when it is determined to be medically necessary because the medical criteria and guidelines shown below are met.**

#### Benefits Application

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Please refer to Certificate for availability of benefit. See Covered Services, Home Infusion Therapy Services.

Home infusion providers must meet eligibility and/or credentialing requirements as defined by the Plan to be eligible for reimbursement.

The patient's individual certificate should be consulted to verify that home infusion therapy benefits are available. Many plans, both managed and non-managed, require precertification. Other plans require prior approval or prior authorization for home care services. Services which have not been precertified or pre-authorized in these plans should be denied in accordance with certificate provisions. Specific benefits for pharmacy and infusion therapy services may vary depending on lines of business. For more information regarding contracts for these types of services, contact our Customer Services Department.

## Policy: Infusion Therapy in the Home

### When Home Infusion Therapy Services are covered

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Home infusion services are medically necessary when they meet **all** of the following criteria:

1. Infusion services must be prescribed by a licensed physician (M.D. or D.O., who has a current Drug Enforcement Agency licensure) as part of a treatment plan for a covered medical condition; **and**
2. The drug must be medically necessary to treat member's medical condition and be covered under the member's policy. Home infusion services to administer an investigational or an otherwise excluded drug are non-covered; **and**
3. Administration of the drug via infusion must be **medically necessary**. Home infusion services for drugs which can be administered orally, topically, or self-injected and achieve the same or equivalent therapeutic effect are not medically necessary; **and**
4. Administration in the home must be safe and medically appropriate. Drugs which are hazardous and require extensive monitoring should be administered in a facility which has appropriate provisions for acute intervention; **and**
5. Administration in the home must be cost-effective. Each case should be evaluated in light of the total number of home health services being requested. Some patients may require multiple services which can be more cost-effectively delivered in a facility (inpatient or outpatient) or in a physician's office.

#### **Home infusion drugs may fall into several categories:**

##### **A. Self Administered:**

These drugs do not require nursing supervision in the home, but can be administered by the patient and/or family.

##### **B. Limited Nursing Supervision:**

Some drugs require supervision by a nurse for initiation of therapy but the patient and/or family can be trained in administration. Intermittent home health visits may be required to monitor the patient on an ongoing basis. Included in this category are the following drugs:

1. IV hydration therapy for patients with hyperemesis gravidarum (in lieu of hospitalization), or for rehydration of a chronically ill patient maintained at home. Other requests may be reviewed on an IC basis. IV hydration provided as part of administration of an IV drug (e.g., chemotherapy) is considered an integral part of the drug treatment and additional reimbursement is not allowed.
2. Total parenteral nutrition (TPN)
3. Home infusion pain management in chronic disease states such as cancer, AIDS, or other end-stage disease.

##### **C. Intensive Nursing Supervision:**

These services require continuous monitoring for adverse reaction and/or the presence of a nurse in the home until the infusion is complete. Due to the risk of adverse consequence, a letter of medical necessity is required from the treating physician which includes a statement that home administration is appropriate for the following patients.

- IV Amphotericin B in chronically ill patients
- Blood transfusion, usually in terminal adult patients requiring chronic/frequent transfusion
- IV Dobutamine therapy for patients awaiting cardiac transplant or with end-stage cardiac disease.
- IV Antibiotics

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1. When medical necessity requirements for home infusion therapy have been met, Nursing visits may be allowed as follows:
  - a. Low intensity
    - i. One training visit and nursing visits of up to 2 hours per week for IV antibiotics, home TPN administered via peripheral line.
    - ii. One training visit and up to 4 hours of nursing visits per week for IV Chemotherapy, IV hydration, Home TPN administered via central line.
  - b. High intensity
    - i. One time visit with prolonged nursing supervision:
      - Blood transfusion, up to four hours
      - IV aminophyllin
    - ii. Daily visits by RN up to 2 hours: IV dopamine
2. Requests for other or additional nursing services should be reviewed on an Individual Consideration basis.

### D. External Infusion Pumps:

External infusion pumps may be considered medically necessary under the following conditions:

- ◆ A prolonged infusion (at least 8 hours) is medically necessary, or the drug must be infused at a controlled rate to avoid **toxicity** and other means of accomplishing this are not acceptable. Drugs for which a pump may be considered medically necessary include Acyclovir, 5-FU, Foscarnet, Amphotericin B, Vancomycin, and Ganciclovir. Requests for pumps for other drugs should be reviewed on an individual consideration basis.
- ◆ Pediatric requests should be reviewed on an individual consideration basis, with consideration of volume of infusate versus body surface area.

## When Home Infusion Therapy Services are not covered

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1. When the medical criteria and guidelines listed above in the "When Home Infusion Services are Covered" section are not met.
2. When the infusion services are not prescribed by a licensed physician (M.D. or D.O., who has a current DEA licensure) as part of a treatment plan for a covered medical condition.
3. When the drug is not medically necessary to treat member's medical condition and/or is not covered under the member's policy. Home infusion services to administer an investigational or an otherwise excluded drug are non-covered.
4. When the administration of the drug via infusion is not **medically necessary**. Home infusion services for drugs which can be administered orally, topically, or self-injected and achieve the same or equivalent therapeutic effect are not medically necessary.
5. When administration in the home is not safe and medically appropriate. Drugs which are hazardous and require extensive monitoring should be administered in a facility which has appropriate provisions for acute intervention.
6. When administration in the home is not cost-effective. Each case should be evaluated in light of the total number of home health services being requested. Some patients may require multiple services which can be more cost-effectively delivered in a facility (inpatient or outpatient) or in a physician's office.

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7. Home IV infusion of heparin for [thromboembolic](#) disease is considered **investigational**. IV heparin or other anticoagulants used for line maintenance are considered an integral part of home infusion services and additional reimbursement is not allowed. Self administered subcutaneous heparin injections do not require limited nursing services.
8. IV chemotherapy. Home administration of chemotherapy infused at a frequency of once daily or less and which requires direct nursing supervision is not appropriate. (This service may be delivered in an Outpatient Clinic or Physician's Office.)
9. Short term IV pain management post-operatively or for acute episodes of pain (such as following a [ton-sillectomy](#)) is not medically necessary in the home. (Patient should be weaned from IV infusion prior to discharge home.)

### Policy Guidelines

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Non-prescription Legend Drugs (e.g., acetaminophen, aspirin) or other services non-covered by the plan remain non-covered regardless if provided by a home infusion company.

Charges for routinely included supplies such as gauze, infusion sets, needles, cassettes, tape, cleansing solutions (betadine, alcohol), heparin and saline flushes, diluents for mixing drugs, and splints are included in the infusion reimbursement.

Catheter care may be reported separately when used as a stand-alone therapy, or during days not covered under per diem by another therapy. PICC line care will only be allowed as a separate charge if there is no other therapy in the last 30 days in the home.

### Billing/Coding/Physician Documentation Information

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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 Policies on the Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina web site at [www.bcbsnc.com](http://www.bcbsnc.com). They are listed in the Category Search on the Medical Policy search page.

*Applicable codes: 99506, 99601, 99602, S5035, S5036, S5497, S5498, S5501, S5502, S5517, S5518, S5520, S5521, S5522, S5523, S9325, S9326, S9327, S9328, S9329, S9330, S9331, S9336, S9338, S9345, S9346, S9347, S9348, S9349, S9351, S9353, S9355, S9357, S9359, S9361, S9363, S9364, S9365, S9366, S9367, S9368, S9370, S9372, S9373, S9374, S9375, S9376, S9377, S9379, S9490, S9494, S9497, S9500, S9501, S9502, S9503, S9504, S9537, S9538, S9542, S9558, S9559, S9810*

*Documentation Requirement: The medical record should document the medical necessity for the services, including medical diagnosis, proposed frequency of services, proposed duration of services, and a social assessment of the home situation.*

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.

### Policy Key Words

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Key Words: Home Infusion Therapy, IV, Drugs, TPN, Intravenous, DME, Durable Medical Equipment,

DME0100

## Medical Term Definitions

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### **Durable Medical Equipment**

any equipment that provides therapeutic benefit to a patient due to certain medical conditions and/or illnesses. The equipment must be able to withstand repeated use and is primarily and customarily used to serve a medical purpose. It is appropriate for use in the home.

### **Enterocutaneous fistula**

an abnormal passage or communication between the intestine and the skin.

### **Epidural**

situated within the spinal canal, on or outside the dura mater (tough membrane surrounding the spinal cord).

### **Intractable**

resistant to cure, relief, or control.

### **Intraspinal**

situated or occurring within the spine column.

### **Intravenous**

within the vein.

### **Malabsorption**

impaired absorption of nutrients in the small intestine.

### **Subcutaneous**

under the skin.

### **Thromboembolic**

a condition where there is an obstruction of a blood vessel with thrombotic material (clot).

### **Tonsillectomy**

surgical removal of the tonsils.

### **Toxicity**

the quality of being poisonous.

## Scientific Background and Reference Sources

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8/97 - Plan Medical Director

8/97 - Plan Corporate Pharmacist

8/97 - PAG Consultant

8/97 - Consultant - Interim - Home Solutions

9/97 - ANR comments reviewed. Minimal changes made.

## Policy: Infusion Therapy in the Home

12/99 Medical Policy Advisory Group  
Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel - 10/2000  
Medical Policy Advisory Group - 10/2000  
Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel - 8/2002  
Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel - 8/2004  
Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel - 8/30/2006

### Policy Implementation/Update Information

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3/98 Original Policy issued

9/99 Reformatted, Medical Term Definitions added.

12/99 Medical Policy Advisory Group

4/00 Removed indications stating that the patient must be homebound. Corrected typographical errors.

10/00 Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel review. Removed criteria for Total parenteral Nutrition. Instructed reader to reference the TPN policy. Removed IV antibiotics from list of noncovered services and included IV antibiotics in list of covered services. System coding changes. Medical Policy Advisory Group review. No further changes. Approve.

4/01 Coding line revised.

5/01 Changes in formatting.

7/01 Changed name of policy from Home Infusion Therapy to Infusion Therapy in the Home.

10/02 Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel review 8/15/2002. No changes recommended. System coding changes.

7/03 Additional information added to Policy Guideline section of the policy regarding items that are included in the reimbursement and PICC lines. Removed reference to a specific policy for TPN. Have added subcutaneous as a route of infusion therapy in the discussion section of the policy. New July 2003 CPT codes 99601 and 99602 added to policy. CPT codes 99551, 99552, 99553, 99554, 99555, 99556, 99557, 99558, 99561, 99562, 99564, 99565, 99566, 99567, 99568, 99569 removed from billing and coding section of policy. Codes not valid for dates of service after 6/30/03. Codes deleted by CPT effective 6/30/03.

4/04 Billing/Coding section updated for consistency.

9/9/04 Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel review 8/27/04. No changes to criteria. Added "clinic settings, infusion suites and/or physician offices" to "Description" section, at end of last sentence in first paragraph. Codes S9524 and S9546 removed from "Billing/Coding" section. These codes are no longer valid.

1/06/05 First quarter 2005 HCPCS codes G0345, G0346, G0347, G0348, G0349, G0350, G0351, G0353, G0354, G0355, G0356, G0357, G0358, G0359, G0360, G0361, G0362, G0363 added to Billing/Coding section of policy.

10/2/06 Added key word and reference source. HCPCS deleted codes G0345, G0346, G0347, G0348, G0349, G0350, G0351, G0353, G0354, G0355, G0356, G0357, G0358, G0359, G0360, G0361, G0362, G0363 removed from "Billing/Coding" section. No changes to criteria.

9/22/08 The following statement deleted from Item A. in the When Covered section: "For Managed Care Products (those products which allow direct reimbursement to the pharmacist for covered drugs), the following drugs are available under the Pharmacy benefit: Growth hormone, Factor XIII."

## **Policy: Infusion Therapy in the Home**

Deleted HCPCS Codes S9543 and S9800 from the Billing/Coding Section. Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel review 8/25/08. No change to policy statement.

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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.

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