

AAP Private Payer Advocacy Update

July 2009

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<http://aapnews.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/30/7/22-a>

1. AAP advocates for combination vaccines

The AAP sent a letter to the national carriers urging payment for the increased costs primarily associated with increased counseling inherent in administering combination vaccines. Since the current CPT immunization administration codes (90465-90474) do not include all resources expended in the administration of combination vaccines, supplemental payment for such administrations must be made to adequately compensate for administering a combination vaccine. The letter outlines strategies for appropriate payment of combination vaccines, including payment per vaccine component and new CPT codes for immunization administration. A copy of the letter regarding combination vaccines is attached

(<http://www.aapca3.org/law/ppa/combovacines0709.pdf>) and may be accessed on the AAP Member Center, at <http://www.aap.org/moc> and link to the private payer advocacy page (AAP Letters to Carriers). Members and pediatric councils are encouraged to share the letter with their regional health plan carriers.

2. TRICARE contracts with Aetna, UHC

TRICARE announced that it is contracting with UHC and Aetna as new TRICARE contracted entities **effective April 1, 2010.**

UHC will replace Humana in the south region (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee (excluding the Ft. Campbell area) and Texas (excluding the El Paso area).

Aetna will replace HealthNet in the north region (Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin and portions of Iowa (Rock Island Arsenal area), Missouri (St. Louis area) and Tennessee (Ft. Campbell area).

TriWest will continue to be the TRICARE contracted entity for the West region (Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa (excluding Rock Island Arsenal area), Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri (except the St. Louis area), Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas (the southwestern corner, including El Paso), Utah, Washington and Wyoming)

3. UHC Contacts by AAP

The AAP continues to engage UnitedHealthcare (UHC) on its pay for performance program (Premium Designation Program[®]), communications, provider relations and contracting. On a conference call on July 1, 2009, UHC agreed to provide updated regional contact information to share with AAP Chapters and by October 2009, have a process for medical society review of its Administrative Guide which a component of each contract. The UHC Administrative Guide can be found at:

https://www.unitedhealthcareonline.com/ccmcontent/ProviderII/UHC/en-US/Assets/ProviderStaticFiles/ProviderStaticFilesPdf/Tools%20and%20Resources/2009_UHC_AdminGuide.pdf

UHC is also revising its credentialing process and will be surveying physicians on their experience becoming a UHC network member. The AAP is also preparing to solicit AAP member's experience with the UHC call center and network contacts.

Currently, UnitedHealthcare(UHC) is running a survey to learn more about the needs of physicians, specialty benefit providers and facilities as well as identify trends and help prioritize the development and enhancement of tools and resources concerning its subsidiary, Oxford Health Plans. This is an opportunity to provide input on the needs and concerns of pediatric practices in the Oxford Health Plan network. To access the survey visit <http://www.oxfordhealth.com> The survey is accessible through the Messages section on the physician home page under the link [Effect change. Give us your feedback.](#) Or go directly to <http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/survey-intro.zgi?p=WEB229B9CX5Q57>

4. Arizona Chapter addressing obesity coverage

Amy Shoptaugh, M.D., FAAP, AzAAP Pediatric Council member, is working with the Chapter's Obesity Committee and has developed talking points for use when meeting with insurers about enhancing coverage for obesity prevention and treatment. The chapter is also preparing to survey carriers to assess coverage and administrative practices such as payable codes, pre-authorization requirements, limitations on the number of allowable visits, network capacity for pediatric nutritionists, and payment structures even when codes are recognized and covered. Steps are also under way to assess the extent to which commercial insurers collect and utilize BMI data. The committee is encouraging health plans to educate clinicians about the importance of

calculating BMI percentile at well-child visits, and is studying the use of incentive programs to improve clinician assessment and treatment of childhood obesity.

5. Immunization Best Business Practices online CME module now available

The "Immunizations: Best Business Practices" PediaLink module is now available to help pediatricians identify effective ways to make immunizations a successful part of the practice. With this PediaLink Essential course, users will learn how to lower office costs through ordering/purchasing vaccines, storing vaccines, calculating office overhead, administering vaccines, coding, and much more. Visit <http://www.pedialink.org> to find the course, which is also available for free by contacting Elizabeth Sobczyk at esobczyk@aap.org.

6. Save the date for Pediatric Council Forum at 2009 NCE

If you are planning to attend the 2009 NCE, make sure to join the discussion on strategies for pediatric councils at the NCE. The pediatric council forum will be on Saturday, October 17th from 4:00-5:00 pm in the Washington Convention Center, Room 140A. Among the topics to discuss will be ways to engage carriers and incorporating specialty pediatrics issues.

7. AAP News articles related to private payer advocacy issues

The following articles related to private payer advocacy issues are in the July 2009 AAP News:

BCBS settlement agreement allows physicians to file disputes

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Webinar on Promoting Recognition and Payment for the Medical Home Through Chapter Pediatric Councils (Presented at the 2009 ALF which includes David Turkewitz, MD, FAAP and Pennsylvania Chapter President on the PA medical home). The webinar can be accessed on the AAP Member Center at: <http://www.aap.org/moc> and under Practice Management Online, click on the PPA link then select PPA Webinar Archives.

Check out the Private Payer Advocacy (PPA) page on the AAP Member Center:

<http://www.aap.org/moc/reimburse/defaultcfm> (requires member log-in)

Included are links and information on Pediatric Councils, letters to carriers, and PPA webinars and other resources

For additional information on AAP private payer advocacy, contact Lou Terranova, Senior Health Policy Analyst at lterranova@aap.org or 800/433-9016 ext 7633

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