

Medical Policy

Speech Generating Devices

Policy Number: 053

	Commercial and Connector/ Qualified Health Plans	MassHealth	Medicare Advantage
Authorization required	X	X	X
No Prior Authorization			

Overview

The purpose of this document is to describe the guidelines Mass General Brigham Health Plan 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.

Mass General Brigham Health Plan 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 InterQual® criteria. To access the criteria, log into Mass General Brigham Health Plan's provider website at MassGeneralBrighamHealthPlan.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.

Medicare Variation

Mass General Brigham Health Plan uses guidance from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for coverage determinations for its Medicare Advantage plan members. National Coverage Determinations (NCDs), Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs), Local Coverage Articles (LCAs) and documentation included in the Medicare manuals are the basis for coverage determinations. When there is no guidance from CMS for the requested service, Mass General Brigham Health Plan's medical policies are used for coverage determinations. **At the time of Mass General Brigham Health Plan's most recent policy review, Medicare has the following documentation:**

1. [NCD - Speech Generating Devices \(50.1\)](#)
2. [LCD - Speech Generating Devices \(SGD\) \(L33739\)](#)
3. [Article - Speech Generating Devices \(SGD\) - Policy Article \(A52469\)](#)

MassHealth Variation

Mass General Brigham Health Plan uses guidance from MassHealth for coverage determinations for its Mass General Brigham Medicaid ACO members. **At the time of Mass General Brigham Health Plan's most recent policy review, [Guidelines for Medical Necessity Determination for Augmentative and Alternative Communication Devices, Including Speech-Generating Devices](#).**

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.

Codes

The following codes are included below for informational purposes only; inclusion of a code does not constitute or imply coverage.

This list of codes applies to commercial and MassHealth plans only.

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
E2511	Speech generating software program, for personal computer or personal digital assistant
E2512	Accessory for speech generating device, mounting system
E2599	Accessory for speech generating device, not otherwise classified

Effective

September 2025: Annual update. Updated criteria to reflect use of InterQual®. Added NCD. Resumed PA requirement.

October 2024: Ad hoc update. Added MassHealth Variation.

September 2024: Annual update. Removed prior authorization requirements for all lines of business.

July 2023: Annual update. Medicare Advantage added to table. Medicare Variation language added. References updated.

July 2022: Annual update. References updated.

July 2021: Annual update. References updated.

July 2020: Annual update. Codes update. References updated.

July 2019: Annual update. Updated references.

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

December 2017: Effective Date.

References

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