

Medi-Cal Support for Breastfeeding!

Key to Establishing a Sustainable Breastfeeding Network for California Mothers and Babies

Problem

- In order to improve breastfeeding rates mothers and babies need access to sustainable networks for support.
- Mothers and infants have trouble accessing breastfeeding support and breastpumps through Medi-Cal.

Ramifications

- Barrier to breastfeeding initiation, duration and exclusivity for low-income mothers
- Low breastfeeding rates
- Higher health risks
- WIC is the primary source of breast pumps and consultations

It Takes a Village

- Long standing and complex problem
- Efforts on part of many advocates
 - Breastfeeding coalitions
 - CA Breastfeeding Promotion Advisory Committee
 - Maternal and Child Health Access

Current Efforts

- CA Dept. of Health Care Services (DHCS)
- CA WIC Association
- CA Dept. of Public Health (CDPH)
 - WIC and MCAH
- Local efforts

DHCS Supports Breastfeeding!

- “It is the priority of the DHCS to promote, protect and support breastfeeding as the healthy and most preferred method of infant feeding, for at least the first year of life.”

Commitment from DHCS

- To understand basics of breastfeeding and breast pump specifications.
- To understand that the timing and quality of breastfeeding support is critical to breastfeeding initiation, duration and exclusivity.

Commitment from Advocates

- To understand Medi-Cal operations and regulations.
- To understand impact and complexity of requested changes.

What is improved?

Who is Covered

- Lactation support services and breast pumps may be billed under mother's or infant's Medi-Cal number.
- Lactation support services and breast pump coverage is available on the infant's card even if the infant is past one year of age.

Accessing Benefits

- Lactation Support-via Mother's Medi-Cal
 - CPSP, during 60 day post-partum period
 - 'full scope Medi-Cal', after 60 day post-partum period, nutrition counseling benefits, CPT 4 codes 99211-99215

Accessing Benefits

- Lactation Support- via Infant's Medi-Cal
 - Nutrition counseling benefit
 - CPT 4 codes 99211-99215

TARs for Lactation Consultation?

- Treatment Authorizations Requests (TARs) are generally not required under fee-for-service or managed care.

Breast Pumps

Are a benefit when prescribed by a licensed health care provider.

Manual and Personal Pumps

- E0602
 - Breast pump, manual, any style, purchase only, maximum reimbursement for purchase \$23.62
- E0603
 - Breast pump, electric (AC and/or DC), any type known as personal grade electric breast pump, maximum reimbursement for purchase only, \$93.15

Hospital Grade Pumps

- E0604
 - Breast pump, heavy duty, hospital grade, rental only, maximum reimbursement \$2.72/day
 - TARs are required when the rental cost for a hospital grade breast pump reaches \$50, approx. 18 days

Durable Medical Equipment Provider Moratorium

- Breast pumps are durable medical equipment (DME)
- 2008 moratorium lifted on new DME providers except for counties of Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, or for the specific provision of lactation aids

Reimbursement of IBCLCs

- Medi-Cal providers are either licensed ‘providers’ or ‘practitioners’ working under a provider.
- IBCLCs currently can work under a provider in CPSP, if they meet the requirements of one of the approved practitioners.

Medi-Cal Managed Care

- Large variation in breastfeeding support in different Medi-Cal Managed Care plans
- Outdated guidelines with few specifics for quality care

Current Efforts

- Local efforts-partnerships with WIC, hospitals, clinics, health plans, DME providers, pump manufacturers

Improvements to Medi-Cal

- Extend TAR requirement for rental of a hospital grade pump to 60-90 days
- Do not require failure of a personal pump to qualify for a hospital grade rental
- Post breastpump specs in Provider Bulletin
- Allow IBCLCs to become a 'Provider'
- Allow IBCLCs to become a CPSP approved 'Practitioner'

What You Can Do

- Start to 'Connect the Dots' in your community
 - WIC sites
 - Local hospitals
 - Local clinics and providers
 - Health plans
 - Medical equipment providers

More Info

- CA WIC Association

<http://www.calwic.org/breastfeeding.aspx>

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