

Amerigroup Considerations for Medical Necessity

Certain outpatient surgical procedures require precertification or authorization when performed at sites other than participating Ambulatory Surgery Centers (ASCs). Unless medical necessity criteria are met for these procedures to be performed elsewhere, these outpatient surgical procedures should be performed at freestanding ASCs. Only services which cannot be safely and effectively provided at ASCs will be precertified/authorized to be performed in a hospital setting.

Services meeting medical necessity to be performed in the hospital include those associated with:

- An emergency room visit
- Hospital observation
- An outpatient surgery performed on the same day

Examples which meet medical necessity criteria to be performed at a hospital include, but are not limited to:

- Pediatrics cases (under age 18)
- Gastroenterology specific cases:
 - Patients currently suffering from active gastrointestinal bleeding including recent blood loss, bright red, tarry, low hematocrit (HCT), vomiting blood, known bleeding varices
- Ophthalmology specific cases:
 - Detached retina cases
 - Patients needing general anesthesia per the clinical notes from the surgeon, anesthesiologist or Primary Care Provider (PCP)
- Respiratory disease including:
 - Asthma
 - Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)/emphysema
- Sleep apnea on Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP)
- Obesity Body Mass Index (BMI) > 40
- Patients with a history of complications with sedation, anesthesia or surgery
- Cardiac disease including:
 - Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) within the last month (any episode of documented or active CHF, Emergency Room (ER) visit, admission, worsening chronic CHF, recent adjustment of medications, etc.)
 - Myocardial Infarction (MI) within the last six weeks
 - Arrhythmia in the last six weeks
 - Pacemaker in place
 - Automated Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator (AICD) in place
 - Patients taking Coumadin, Lovenox, Plavix or other platelet inhibitor
 - Severe anemia, HCT < 25 percent, platelets < 30,000
- Patients with any other medical comorbidity the surgeon, PCP, specialist or anesthesiologist feels would make it important to provide procedure in an inpatient facility

If there is no medical reason to refer a member to a hospital or the reason does not meet criteria for immediate approval, please refer the member to a participating ASC.

If you have questions about gastroenterology, urology, podiatry and ophthalmology procedures requiring precertification or authorization, use the [Precertification Lookup Tool](#) or call our Provider Services team at 1-800-454-3730.