

Clinical Policy: Ambulatory Surgery Center Optimization

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[Revision Log](#)

Description

Ambulatory surgery centers (ASC) operate for the purpose of offering outpatient surgical services to members in an environment appropriate for low risk procedures on members with low risk health status. They serve as a high-quality, cost-effective alternative to inpatient surgical services. This policy provides guidance for when surgical services are medically appropriate to be provided in an ASC and can be redirected from an inpatient or outpatient hospital without delaying the services. The goal is not to delay elective procedures and have participants wait if SPU's are available timely and ASC's are not or if the ASC's is available and the SPU is not.

Policy/Criteria

- I. It is the policy of PA Health & Wellness (PHW) that elective procedures performed in an ASC are **medically necessary** when meeting the following indications:
 - A. General guidelines:
 1. Procedure is non-emergent and for a non-life threatening situation;
 2. Requesting surgeon has privileges at an ASC qualified to manage the procedure;
 3. BMI (body mass index) < 40;
 4. Post-operative ventilation is not anticipated;
 5. Operative time expected < 3 hours and combined operative and recovery time is anticipated to be < 23 hours;
 6. Procedure is not expected to result in extensive blood loss or directly involves major blood vessels;
 7. Major or prolonged body cavity invasion is not anticipated;
 8. Health status is American Society of Anesthesiologist (ASA) physical status (PS) class I, II, or III; or if class IV, meets the following:
 - a. Only local anesthetic with minimal sedation is planned;
 - b. No respiratory distress is present;
 - c. No internal cardioverter-defibrillator in a patient requiring electrocautery;
 9. Emergency Transportation to a nearby hospital is available if needed.
 10. All Anesthesia staff will meet licensing and supervision requirements of Pennsylvania.
 - B. Does not have any of the following disqualifying conditions that would indicate a hospital setting is more appropriate (not an all-inclusive list):
 1. Brittle diabetes (instable diabetes that results in disruption of life and often recurrent/prolonged hospitalization);
 2. Resistant hypertension (poorly controlled despite use of 3 antihypertensive agents of different classes);
 3. Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) (FEV1 < 50%);
 4. Advanced liver disease (MELD Score > 8);
 5. Alcohol dependence who is at risk for withdrawal syndrome;
 6. End stage renal disease (on peritoneal or hemodialysis)
 7. Uncompensated chronic heart failure (NYHA class III or IV)
 8. History of myocardial infarction in past 3 months;
 9. History of cerebrovascular accident or transient ischemic attack in past 3 months;

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10. Coronary artery disease with ongoing cardiac ischemia requiring ongoing medical management, placement of drug eluting stent in past year, or non-drug eluting stent or plain angioplasty in past 3 months unless aspirin and antiplatelet drugs will be continued by agreement of surgeon, cardiologist, and anesthesia;
 11. Moderate to severe uncontrolled obstructive sleep apnea;
 12. Implanted pacemaker;
 13. Personal history or family history of complication of anesthesia such as malignant hyperthermia;
 14. Pregnancy;
 15. Bleeding disorder requiring replacement factor or blood products or special infusion products to correct a coagulation defect (DDAVP is not blood product and is OK);
 16. Recent history of drug abuse;
 17. Poorly controlled asthma (FEV1 < 80% despite medical management);
 18. Significant valvular heart disease;
 19. Symptomatic cardiac arrhythmia despite medication;
- C. Procedures appropriate for an ASC (see Table 1) should be redirected from an outpatient hospital setting when the above criteria are met. These procedures should be considered medically necessary per nationally recognized clinical decision support tools (i.e. InterQual™ or MCG).

II. It is the PHW's policy that procedures medically appropriate for an ASC per the criteria listed in section I above, that are performed in an inpatient or outpatient hospital setting, are considered to not be provided in the most appropriate care setting. Providers who request these services will be directed to the most appropriate care setting when the requesting physician has privileges at a qualified ASC capable of providing the requested procedure.

Background

Ambulatory surgery centers (ASCs) are distinct entities that operate to furnish outpatient surgical services to patients. These facilities are either independent (i.e., not a part of a provider of services or any other facility) or operated by a hospital. According to a recent analysis in the 2010 Hospital Ambulatory Medical Care Survey, there were over 22 million surgical and nonsurgical procedures performed at ambulatory surgical centers.⁴ Outpatient surgery in ACSs provide safe, cost-effective alternatives for a variety of surgical procedures with low complication rates.⁵ For example, a survey of the American Society for Surgery of the Hand noted that over 65% of surgeons reported performing hand procedures at ASCs.⁵

The Health Plan may also use tools developed by third parties, such as the InterQual™ Guidelines, and other consensus guidelines and evidence-based medicine, to assist us in administering health benefits. The InterQual™ Care Guidelines and other are intended to be used in connection with the independent professional medical judgment of a qualified health care provider and do not constitute the practice of medicine or medical advice.

Coding Implications

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This clinical policy references Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®). CPT® is a registered trademark of the American Medical Association. All CPT codes and descriptions are copyrighted 2020, American Medical Association. All rights reserved. CPT codes and CPT descriptions are from the current manuals and those included herein are not intended to be all-inclusive and are included for informational purposes only. Codes referenced in this clinical policy are for informational purposes only. Inclusion or exclusion of any codes does not guarantee coverage. Providers should reference the most up-to-date sources of professional coding guidance prior to the submission of claims for reimbursement of covered services.

Table 1: Codes that will be redirected from an outpatient hospital when criteria are met

CPT® Codes	Description
24342	Reinsertion of ruptured biceps or triceps tendon, distal, with or without tendon graft
24359	Tenotomy, elbow, lateral or medial (eg, epicondylitis, tennis elbow, golfer's elbow); debridement, soft tissue and/or bone, open with tendon repair or reattachment
26160	Excision of lesion of tendon sheath or joint capsule (eg, cyst, mucous cyst, or ganglion), hand or finger
27385	Suture of quadriceps or hamstring muscle rupture; primary
27792	Open treatment of distal fibular fracture (lateral malleolus), includes internal fixation, when performed
27822	Open treatment of trimalleolar ankle fracture, includes internal fixation, when performed, medial and/or lateral malleolus; without fixation of posterior lip
28285	Correction, hammertoe (eg, interphalangeal fusion, partial or total phalangectomy)
28299	Correction, hallux valgus (bunionectomy), with sesamoidectomy, when performed; with double osteotomy, any method
28308	Osteotomy, with or without lengthening, shortening or angular correction, metatarsal; other than first metatarsal, each
28750	Arthrodesis, midtarsal or tarsometatarsal, single joint
29848	Endoscopy, wrist, surgical, with release of transverse carpal ligament
31253	Nasal/sinus endoscopy, surgical with ethmoidectomy; total (anterior and posterior), including frontal sinus exploration, with removal of tissue from frontal sinus, when performed
31254	Nasal/sinus endoscopy, surgical with ethmoidectomy; partial (anterior)
47562	Laparoscopy, surgical; cholecystectomy
49650	Laparoscopy, surgical; repair initial inguinal hernia
50590	Lithotripsy, extracorporeal shock wave
52234	Cystourethroscopy, with fulguration (including cryosurgery or laser surgery) and/or resection of; SMALL bladder tumor(s) (0.5 up to 2.0 cm)
52352	Cystourethroscopy, with ureteroscopy and/or pyeloscopy; with removal or manipulation of calculus (ureteral catheterization is included)
52601	Transurethral electroresection of prostate, including control of postoperative bleeding, complete (vasectomy, meatotomy, cystourethroscopy, urethral calibration and/or dilation, and internal urethrotomy are included)
67108	Repair of retinal detachment; with vitrectomy, any method, including, when performed, air or gas tamponade, focal endolaser photocoagulation, cryotherapy, drainage of subretinal fluid, scleral buckling, and/or removal of lens by same technique
67113	Repair of complex retinal detachment (eg, proliferative vitreoretinopathy, stage C-1 or greater diabetic traction retinal detachment, retinopathy of prematurity, retinal tear of greater than 90

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CPT® Codes	Description
	degrees), with vitrectomy and membrane peeling, including, when performed, air, gas, or silicone oil tamponade, cryotherapy, endolaser photocoagulation, drainage of subretinal fluid, scleral buckling, and/or removal of lens

Reviews, Revisions, and Approvals	Date	Approval Date
Policy developed	01/18	
References reviewed and updated.	02/19	
References reviewed and updated	10/19	
In I.C, added reference to procedures in Table 1 and added MCG as an additional option for conducting medical necessity reviews of the procedure. Added table of CPT codes that will be redirected to an ASC from an outpatient hospital when meeting criteria. References reviewed and updated. Replaced “members’ with “members/enrollees” in all instances. Added additional verbiage to criteria II. noting that inpatient or outpatient hospital setting requests will not be considered appropriate “when the requesting physician has privileges at a qualified ASC capable of providing the requested procedure.” CPT codes removed due to the lack of InterQual criteria that can be utilized for medical necessity determination: 11603, 21501, 21552, 23430, 26418, 27328, 28119, 28485, 28615, 28740, 43264, 51102, 52260, 52276, 52310, 52317, 65820.	06/2021	9/10/2021

References

1. Ambulatory Surgery Center Association. Ambulatory Surgery Centers: A positive trend in health care. Accessed 9/15/20 at: <https://www.ascassociation.org/search?executeSearch=true&SearchTerm=a+positive+trend+in+health+care&l=1>.
2. Guidelines for Ambulatory Anesthesia and Surgery; Committee on Ambulatory Surgery Care; American Society of Anesthesiologists, October 2013. Reaffirmed Oct 17, 2018
3. 2017.1 InterQual List of Inpatient Procedures
4. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Medicare Claims Processing Manual; Chapter 14 - Ambulatory Surgery Centers. Rev. 3939. December 22, 2017.
5. Hall, M. J., et al. "Ambulatory surgery data from hospitals and ambulatory surgery centers: United States, 2010." *National health statistics reports* 102 (2017): 1.
6. Thompson, Norfleet B., and James H. Calandruccio. "Hand Surgery in the Ambulatory Surgery Center." *Orthopedic Clinics of North America* 49.1 (2018): 69-72.
7. Lee JH. Anesthesia for ambulatory surgery. *Korean J Anesthesiol.* 2017 Aug;70(4):398-406. doi: 10.4097/kjae.2017.70.4.398. Epub 2017.
8. 2019 Change Healthcare Guidelines for Surgery and Procedures Performed in the Inpatient Setting.

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