

Augmentative Communication and Speech Generating Systems

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All requests for authorization for the services described by this medical policy will be reviewed per Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) guidelines. These services may be authorized under individual consideration for Medicaid members under the age of 21-years if the services are judged to be medically necessary to correct or ameliorate the member's condition. Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS), Supplement B - EPSDT (Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment) Manual.*

Purpose:

This policy addresses Augmentative Communication and Speech Generating Systems and their accessories.

Description & Definitions:

Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems, to include speech generating devices (SGD), are designed to support the needs of members with complex, significant communication disorders as evidenced by impairments of comprehension, cognition, and/or speech-language production. An AAC device can be used to assist impaired members with communication of ideas, wants and needs.

Criteria:

An augmentative communication device or speech generating system is considered medically necessary for **all** of the following:

- Individual meets **1 or more** of the following criteria:
 - The individual cannot functionally communicate basic needs verbally or through gestures due to medical conditions, and expressive language is not expected to be restored. Basic needs include eating, drinking, toileting, and indicating discomfort or pain
 - The individual cannot verbally or through gestures participate in medical care, i.e., indicate decisions regarding medical care or indicate medical needs
 - The individual cannot verbally or through gestures functionally communicate informed consent on medical decisions
- The communication device meets all of the following:
 - Ordered by the practitioner on the CMN/DMAS-352
 - A reasonable and medically necessary part of the individual's treatment plan

- Consistent with the individual's diagnosis and medical condition, particularly the functional limitations and symptoms exhibited by the individual
- Not furnished solely for the convenience of the individual, the family, the attending practitioner, or other practitioner or supplier
- Consistent with generally accepted professional medical standards (i.e., not experimental or investigational)
- Furnished at a safe, effective, and cost effective level, primarily for use in the individual's home or community environment

The following Augmentative speech devices **do not meet the definition of medical necessity**, to include but not limited to:

- MyGuide is a software application for a personal mobile device used for organizational and progress monitoring needs used mostly by caregivers and teachers (families, professionals, schools, and facilities.)
- Reading programs such as Fast ForWord
- More than one item of durable medical equipment for the same or similar purpose
- Multi-lingual modules unless the primary caretaker speaks a language other than English
- An alternative input device if the member is able to use a standard input device

Coding:

Medically necessary with criteria:

Coding	Description
E1399	Durable medical equipment, miscellaneous
E2500	Speech generating device, digitized speech, using prerecorded messages, less than or equal to eight 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

Considered Not Medically Necessary:

Coding	Description
	None

Document History:

Revised Dates:

- 2022: August
- 2021: April, November
- 2020: October
- 2019: September, November
- 2016: March

- 2015: March, July
- 2014: March
- 2013: November
- 2012: October
- 2011: October (changed from Medical 138)

Reviewed Dates:

- 2023: August
- 2022: October
- 2018: August
- 2017: November
- 2013: October
- 2010: October
- 2009: October

Effective Date: November 2008

References:

Including but not limited to: Specialty Association Guidelines; Government Regulations; Winifred S. Hayes, Inc; UpToDate; Literature Review; Specialty Advisors; National Coverage Determination (NCD); Local Coverage Determination (LCD).

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Special Notes: *

This medical policy express Sentara Health Plan's determination of medically necessity of services, and they are based upon a review of currently available clinical information. These policies are used when no specific guidelines for coverage are provided by the Department of Medical Assistance Services of Virginia (DMAS). Medical Policies may be superseded by state Medicaid Plan guidelines. Medical policies are not a substitute for clinical judgment or for any prior authorization requirements of the health plan. These policies are not an explanation of benefits.

Medical policies can be highly technical and complex and are provided here for informational purposes. These medical policies are intended for use by health care professionals. The medical policies do not constitute medical advice or medical care. Treating health care professionals are solely responsible for diagnosis, treatment and medical advice. Sentara Health Plan members should discuss the information in the medical policies with their treating health care professionals. Medical technology is constantly evolving and these medical policies are subject to change without notice, although Sentara Health Plan will notify providers as required in advance of changes that could have a negative impact on benefits.

The Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) covers services, products, or procedures for children, if those items are determined to be medically necessary to "correct or ameliorate" (make better) a defect, physical or mental illness, or condition (health problem) identified through routine medical screening or examination, regardless of whether coverage for the same service or support is an optional or limited service under the state plan. Children enrolled in the FAMIS Program are not eligible for all EPSDT treatment services. All requests for authorization for the services described by this medical policy will be reviewed per EPSDT guidelines. These services may be authorized under individual consideration for Medicaid members under the age of 21-years if the services are judged to be medically necessary to correct or ameliorate the member's condition. *Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS), Supplement B - EPSDT (Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment) Manual.*

All medically necessary medical equipment and supplies under the Virginia Administrative Code (12VAC30-50-165) may be covered only if they are necessary to carry out a treatment prescribed by a practitioner. Only supplies, equipment, and appliances that are determined medically necessary may be covered for reimbursement by DMAS. (12VAC30-50-165) The following criteria must be satisfied through the submission of adequate and verifiable documentation satisfactory to DMAS, or its contractor. Medically necessary DME and supplies shall be:

- Ordered by the practitioner on the CMN/DMAS-352;
- A reasonable and medically necessary part of the individual's treatment plan;
- Consistent with the individual's diagnosis and medical condition, particularly the functional limitations and symptoms exhibited by the individual; • Not furnished for the safety or restraint of the individual, or solely for the convenience of the family, attending practitioner, or other practitioner or supplier;
- Consistent with generally accepted professional medical standards (i.e., not experimental or investigational);
- Furnished at a safe, effective, and cost-effective level; and
- Suitable for use, and consistent with 42 CFR 440.70(b)(3), that treats a diagnosed condition or assists the individual with functional limitations.

SHP Virginia Medicaid Plan requests should be referred to a case manager.

Ocular, optical, or eye tracking speech devices may be covered if recommended by speech pathologist or occupational therapist when medical necessity criteria is met for a speech generating device and individual has medical condition that impedes the use of the device without ocular, optical, or eye tracking.

For SHP Virginia Medicaid Plans a 30 to 60-day trial rental period must be considered for all electronic devices to assure that the chosen device is the one most appropriate to meet the individual's medical needs. (Note: For those individuals whose needs can be clearly defined by the comprehensive speech-language pathologist's evaluation, a trial rental period is not necessary.) At the end of the trial rental period, if purchase of the device is recommended, documentation by the speech-language pathologist of the individual's ability to use the communication device must be provided.

Replacements and upgrades are allowed every 36 months or if device is completely nonfunctional.

Request for specific communication software for dedicated digitized or synthesized speech that enables a laptop computer, desktop computer, or personal digital assistant (PDA), tablet to function as a speech generating device and program insulation and technical support are reimbursable

Additional reimbursement heavy duty case, care plus extended warrantee to 36 months, additional software and required accessories for a laptop computer, desktop computer, or personal digital assistant (PDA).

Keywords:

SHP Augmentative Speech Device, SHP Durable Medical Equipment 30, keyboard, iPad, screen, mouse, computer, speech pathologist, functional limitation, speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, auditory, expressive speech impairment, alternative natural communication, sign language, Synthesized speech devices, degenerative disease, speech impairment, Speech-Generating Devices, communication aids, voice output communication aids (VOCAs), Speech Enhancer SGD, DynaMyte, DragonDictate, VitalVoice, Dialo, Eyegaze, Alternative communication device, AAC, speech-generating device, SGD, Devices with Digitized or Synthesized Speech Output and Ocular, optical, or eye tracking speech devices, BIGmack®, Cheap Talk 8 6-levels Communicator, GoTalk™ Series, Hip Talker, iTalk2™ Communication Aid, Little Mack®, One by Four Talker, Partner/One™, Partner/Two™, Personal Talker, Sequencer, Step-by-Step™ with Levels Communicator, Talking Brix™ Communicators, TalkTrac™ Plus, TalkTrac™ Plus with Levels, TECH/Plus: 32, TECH/Plus: 32+, Tech/Speak, Tech/Talk, Ultimate 8, VoicePal, VoicePal Max, VoicePal Pro, EasyTalk, Hand Held Voice, MessageMate, SuperTalker™ Progressive Communicator, DynaVox M3, EasyTalk, ET-24, ET-32, Springboard Lite, Talara-32, Tobii ATI s32, Allora, E-talk Tablet, DynaWrite™ 2.0, DynVox T10, DynaVox T15, Freedom 2000, Optimist MMX, Nova Chat 8, Nova Chat 10, Tobii Dynavox T7, Tobii Dynavox T10, Tobii Dynavox T15, Tobii I-12, Tobii I-15, Accent™ 800-M, Accent™ 1000-M, QuickTalker™ Freestyle, QuickTalker™, Freestyle mini, Visual Suite, TapToTalk, AAC, Ablenet's QuickTalker Freestyle, Accent™ 1000-M, Accent™ 800-M, ACD, Allora, Alternative communication device, Augmentative and alternative communication, Beamz Interactive Music System, Big Talk Assistive Technology Communicator, BIGmack®, ChatterVox Voice Amplifier, Cheap Talk 8 6-levels Communicator, Clicker 4, ComLink, Devices with Digitized or Synthesized Speech Output and Ocular, optical, or eye tracking speech devices, Dialo, Dragon Computer Speech Recognition Software, Dragon Speak, DragonDictate, DynaMyte, Dynavox, DynaVox M3, DynaVox T15, DynaWrite™ 2.0, DynVox T10, EasyTalk, ECO-14, Enabling Devices Tactile Symbol Communicator, ET-24, ET-32, E-talk Tablet, E-triloquist, EyeGaze, FAB Frenchay Alphabet Board, Freedom 2000, Freestyle mini, GOTALK 9+, GoTalk Express 32 – Advanced Communication Aid, GoTalk™ Series, Grid 3 for WindowsGoTalk Now, Grid for iPad, Gus pocket communicator, Hand Held Voice, Hip Talk Plus Communicator, Hip Talker, iCommunicate, iCommunicate for iPad, iTalk2™ Communication Aid, LetMeTalk, Lightwriter, Lightwriter SL40, LINK Plus Communication Aid, Little Mack®, Logan ProxTalker Modular AAC Device Package, LogansVoice Communication Bundle, MegaBee Assisted Communication and Writing Tablet, MegaBee Eye Pointing Communication Tablet, MessageMate, Metacom, MyTobii, NextUp Talker, Nova Chat 10, Nova Chat 8, One by Four Talker, Optimist MMX, PalmOne, Partner/One™, Partner/Two™, Personal Talker, Picture exchange communication system] PECS, Pocket Go-Talk 5-Level Communication Device, Predictable text-to-speech app, Pretke Romich, Proloquo2Go, Quick Glance/Eye Gaze System, QuickTalk AAC, QuickTalker™ Freestyle, Rolltalk Maxi Smart, Sequencer, SGD, SofType, SonoFlex, Speech Enhancer SGD, Speech-generating device, Springboard Lite, Step-by-Step™ with Levels Communicator, SuperTalker™ Progressive Communicator, Talara-32, Talk to Me - Text to Speech, Talking Brix™ Communicators, TalkTablet, TalkTrac™ Plus with Levels, TalkTrac™ Plus, TapToTalk, TECH/Plus: 32+, TECH/Plus: 32, Tech/Speak, Tech/Talk, Tobii ATI s32, Tobii Dynavox, Tobii Dynavox app, Tobii Dynavox T10, Tobii Dynavox T15, Tobii Dynavox T7, Tobii I-12, Tobii I-15, Tobii Sono Flex, Toshiba Notebook w/Grid2, TouchChat, TouchChat HD – AAC, TouchChat HD – AAC with WordPower, Ultimate 8, Ultratec Operator Assisted, Visual Suite, VitalVoice, Voice4U, VoicePal Max, VoicePal Pro, VoicePal, Words+ Ez keys, Zygo Pollyanna