



HEALTHPLEX REFERENCE MANUAL FOR DENTAL SERVICES: Essential PLANS

Please Note: This manual is a supplement to be used in conjunction with an enrollee's Dental Plan's Certificate of Coverage (COC) or Evidence of Coverage (EOC) as well as the applicable contract between you and/or the Health Plan and Healthplex. The information in your COC, EOC and/or contract supersedes this document.

A. Accessibility Statement

The clinical review criteria, internal rule, protocol or guideline relied upon to make a decision for a requested dental service is available to an enrollee or their designee upon request and free of charge. Oral interpretation and alternate formats of written material for enrollees with special needs are also available.

Where applicable and upon request by an enrollee, any written notices/information shall be translated into a preferred non-English language.

Please contact Healthplex Customer Service for help with questions, language and/or interpretative services by phone at 1-800-468-9868 or email to: info@healthplex.com.

B. Introduction

The Healthplex guidelines and clinical criteria apply to the procedure codes, nomenclature and descriptors outlined in the most current version of the Current Dental Terminology (CDT) reference manual published by the American Dental Association.

This document includes information pertaining to the most frequently billed services. Exceptions to published limitations are given on a case-by-case basis considering individual factors including but not limited to age, comorbidities, special needs and access to the local delivery system. This document is a supplement to be used in conjunction with the Dental Policy and Procedure Code Manual published by New York State as well as the applicable contract between the enrollee and/or the Health Plan and Healthplex.



C. Dental Benefit Administration

Benefits for planned or rendered dental care are provided as defined in the members' contracts, which in addition to clinical criteria may include exclusions, limitations and administrative guidelines for certain procedures. Contracts vary depending on regulatory requirements and/or plan-specific rules and level of coverage.

If a patient is enrolled in a managed care plan that provide coverage for essential services, benefits are available when services are rendered by an in network or participating provider only. For a list of participating providers, please go online to: https://www.healthplex.com/our_dentists.

Participating providers are contracted to accept the reimbursement for each covered dental service as payment in full up to the plan's benefit maximum (if applicable). The member will still be responsible for copayments and deductibles where applicable.

Coverage must be in force at the time a service is rendered in order for benefits to be payable. Eligibility must be checked prior to rendering services for every appointment.

D. Healthplex Clinical Criteria

Healthplex's guidelines, protocols and review criteria for dental services are developed and maintained by the Healthplex Dental Director, are reviewed at least annually and are updated as needed.

Criteria are created from an aggregate of information from:

- Current dental literature;
- Practice Parameters from the American Association of Periodontology (www.perio.org);
- Parameters of Care from the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (www.aaoms.org);
- Oral Health Policies and Clinical Guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (www.aapd.org);
- Position Statements from the American Association of Dental Consultants (www.aadc.org);
- Dental Practice Parameters from the American Dental Association (www.ada.org);
- Evaluation of new and emerging technologies from participating dental professionals;
- Guidance documents issued by applicable regulatory oversight entities; and
- Public information from other insurance companies.

Criteria are reviewed and approved at least annually by Healthplex's Utilization Management Committee, whose clinical members, at a minimum, include the Dental Director (a licensed Dentist), a member of the Healthplex Clinical Review Staff (typically a General Dentist or an Orthodontist), a practicing network general dentist, an Oral Surgeon, an Endodontist, and a Periodontist.



E. The Professional Review Process

All Clinical Reviewers shall be actively licensed dental professionals with an appropriate level of education, training, and professional experience in clinical practice. Only a clinical peer reviewer, a licensed dentist, shall render an adverse determination if based on medical necessity.

Clinical Reviewers shall evaluate requested services based on plan specific guidelines, clinical application of review criteria, patient condition, health history, and demographics (including but not limited to geographical area, assessment of the local delivery system, age, complications, progress of treatment, home environment and social habits). Based on an aggregate of these factors, the Reviewer shall indicate if the services are approved, denied, or if further information is needed to render a determination. Individual cases may be elevated to a Dental Director and/or their designated representative for consideration of special circumstances as necessary.

When diagnostic information is needed for a clinical reviewer to render a determination, it must be supplied with the request for dental services. If necessary information is not submitted in a timely manner, the request for services will be denied.

F. Scope of Coverage for Essential Services Programs

Programs like Medicaid, Essential Health Plan, Child Health Plus, Exchange and Affordable Care Act Marketplace provide coverage for essential dental services rather than comprehensive care.

Healthplex makes decisions for requested dental services by utilizing the New York State's definition of essential services as described in the Dental Policy and Procedure Code Manual extracted from Version 2023 below:

“When reviewing requests for services the following guidelines will be used: Treatment will not be routinely approved when functional replacement with less costly restorative materials, including prosthetic replacement, is possible.

Caries index, periodontal status, recipient compliance, dental history, medical history and the overall status and prognosis of the entire dentition, among other factors, will be taken into consideration. Treatment is not considered appropriate when the prognosis of the tooth is questionable or when a reasonable alternative course of treatment would be extraction of the tooth and replacement. Treatment such as endodontics or crowns will not be approved in association with an existing or proposed prosthesis in the same arch, unless the tooth is a critical abutment for a prosthesis provided through the NYS Medicaid program, or unless replacement by addition to an existing prosthesis or new prosthesis is not feasible. If the total number of teeth which require, or are likely to require treatment would be considered excessive or when maintenance of the tooth is not considered essential or appropriate in view of the overall dental status of the recipient, treatment will not be covered. Treatment of deciduous teeth when exfoliation is reasonably imminent will not be routinely reimbursable. Claims submitted for the treatment of deciduous cuspids and molars for children ten



(10) years of age or older, or for deciduous incisors in children five (5) years of age or older will be pended for professional review. As a condition for payment, it may be necessary to submit, upon request, radiographic images and other information to support the appropriateness and necessity of these restorations. Extraction of deciduous teeth will only be reimbursed if injection of a local anesthetic is required.

Eight (8) posterior natural or prosthetic teeth (molars and/or bicuspid) in occlusion (four (4) maxillary and four (4) mandibular teeth in functional contact with each other) will be considered adequate for functional purposes. Requests will be reviewed for necessity based upon the presence/absence of eight (8) points of natural or prosthetic occlusal contact in the mouth (bicuspid/molar contact).

One (1) missing maxillary anterior tooth or two (2) missing mandibular anterior teeth may be considered an esthetic problem that warrants a prosthetic replacement.”

In each procedure code category contained within the detail of this document, Healthplex explains how it applies the principle of essential dentistry to each request for services.

G. General Exclusions include but are not limited to:

1. Fixed bridgework, except for cleft palate stabilization, or when a removable prosthesis would be contraindicated
2. Immediate full or partial dentures
3. Molar root canal therapy for members 21 years of age and over, except when extraction would be medically contraindicated or the tooth is a critical abutment for an existing serviceable prosthesis
4. Crown lengthening
5. Replacement of partial or full dentures prior to required time periods unless appropriately documented and justified
6. Dental work for cosmetic reasons or because of the personal preference of the member or provider
7. Periodontal surgery, except when associated with implants or implant related services
8. Gingivectomy or gingivoplasty, except for the sole correction of severe hyperplasia or hypertrophy associated with drug therapy, hormonal disturbances or congenital defects
9. Adult orthodontics, except in conjunction with, or as a result of, approved orthognathic surgery necessary in conjunction with an approved course of orthodontic treatment or the on-going treatment of clefts
10. Placement of sealants for members under 5 or over 15 years of age
11. Improper usage of panoramic images along with intraoral complete series of images
12. Services that are directly related to a non-approved procedure will not be considered for reimbursement
13. Dental treatment rendered by a non-participating provider are not covered. The member will be responsible for all costs incurred as a result of treatment rendered out of network
14. Crowns for patients under age 16 and/or prosthetics (bridgework/dentures) for patients under age 18 unless request was submitted with documentation to substantiate medical necessity



15. Services outside the scope of coverage will not be considered for reimbursement. For a list of covered procedure codes applicable to a program that follows the essential scope of coverage as defined by New York State, please view the Fee Schedule available online at: <https://www.emedny.org/ProviderManuals/Dental/index.aspx>
 16. Procedures that are medical in nature or should be covered by an accident liability insurer
-

H. Services Which Do Not Meet Existing Standards of Professional Practice Are Not Reimbursable
These services include but are not limited to:

1. Partial dentures provided prior to completion of all Phase I restorative treatment which includes necessary extractions, removal of all decay and placement of permanent restorations
 2. Other dental services rendered when teeth are left untreated
 3. Extraction of clinically sound teeth
 4. Treatment provided when there is either no clinical indication of need noted in the treatment record or rendered in excess of standards. Procedures should not be performed without documentation of clinical necessity. Published “frequency limits” are general reference points on the anticipated frequency for that procedure. Actual frequency must be based on the clinical needs of the individual member
 5. Restorative treatment of teeth that have a hopeless prognosis and should be extracted
 6. Taking of unnecessary or excessive radiographic images
 7. Services not completed
 8. “Unbundling” of procedures
 9. Treatment of deciduous teeth when exfoliation is reasonably imminent
 10. Extraction of deciduous teeth without clinical necessity
 11. General dental services or services outside the scope of a limited practice that are rendered by a specialty provider unless prior authorized
-

I. Statement About Incentives

Healthplex, Inc. shall not, with respect to utilization review activities, permit or provide compensation or anything of value to its employees, agents, or contractors based on:

1. A percentage of the amount by which a claim is reduced for payment or the number of claims or the cost of services for which the person has denied authorization or payment; or
2. Any other method that encourages the rendering of an adverse determination.

Healthplex, Inc. does not use incentives to encourage barriers to care and service. Decision-making is based solely on appropriateness of care and service combined with the applicable dental plan’s scope of coverage. Healthplex, Inc. does not specifically reward any individual for issuing any denial of coverage or for encouraging decisions that result in underutilization.

COVERED PROCEDURES

I. DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

Summary **A. Diagnostic Summary**

Diagnostic services include an oral examination, caries risk assessment and select radiographs to assess the current status and to develop a treatment plan for the maintenance and/or restoration of a patient's oral health. Diagnostic procedures do not generally require prior approval or application of clinical criteria.

Examinations **B. Comprehensive Evaluation**

A comprehensive evaluation is a thorough examination and recording of the extraoral and intraoral hard and soft tissues. This applies to new patients, established patients who have had a significant change in health conditions or other unusual circumstances such as established patients who have been absent from active treatment for three or more years.

Documentation should include the patient's dental and medical history as well as medical consultation/clearance if indicated, evaluation and charting of dental caries, missing or unerupted teeth, restorations, prosthetic appliances, occlusal relationships, periodontal conditions (including periodontal charting), hard and soft tissue anomalies and any other pertinent information.

Reimbursement is generally limited to one exam (comprehensive, periodic, consultation or limited focused) per provider group every 6 months and includes diagnosis, treatment planning and oral cancer screening.

C. Periodic Evaluation

A periodic evaluation is performed on a patient of record to determine any changes to dental and/or medical health status since the previous evaluation.

Reimbursement is generally limited to one exam (comprehensive, periodic, consultation or limited focused) per provider group every 6 months and includes diagnosis, treatment planning and oral cancer screening.

D. Limited Evaluation – Problem Focused

A limited evaluation is performed when a patient presents with a specific problem, complaint and/or dental emergency. Follow-up visits related to previous treatment are not billable and therefore shall not be considered for separate reimbursement.

If a limited/problem focused evaluation does not share a limitation with other types of evaluations, reimbursement is generally allowed once every six months and is not separately payable if rendered on the same day as another exam or consultation.



Radiographs

E. Radiograph Summary

To minimize a patient's radiation exposure, Healthplex recommends that providers exercise professional judgment and utilize the guidelines for prescribing dental radiographs published by the American Dental Association in collaboration with the U.S. Food & Drug Administration available online at:

http://www.ada.org/~media/ADA/Member%20Center/Files/Dental_Radiographic_Examinations_2012.ashx.

Radiographs may be necessary to obtain a determination for certain services. Please mount, date, and label **copies** of the most recent radiographs available. Originals should **always** be retained by the dentist.

Please note: Radiographs submitted to Healthplex will NOT be returned. Healthplex recommends submitting digital radiograph copies whenever possible.

F. Recall x-rays

Recall x-rays typically consist of bitewings and periapical radiographs. Recall x-rays are payable once every 6 months.

G. Complete or Comprehensive Series of Radiographic Images

A complete or comprehensive series is comprised of individual radiographs or a panoramic radiograph plus bitewings. The maximum reimbursement for individual radiographs shall be limited to the allowance for a complete/comprehensive series.

Reimbursement is typically limited to either a complete/comprehensive series or a panoramic radiograph every 36 months.

H. Panoramic Radiographs

Reimbursement is typically limited to either a complete/comprehensive series or a panoramic radiograph every 36 months.

I. Intraoral Occlusal Radiographs

Reimbursement is typically limited to one every 36 months.

J. Cone Beam Computed Tomography (CBCT) Scans

CBCT is unproven and not medically necessary for routine dental diagnosis due to insufficient evidence of efficacy and/or safety.

If the CBCT is within the dental plan's scope of coverage, consideration will be generally limited to those necessary for diagnosis and treatment related to implants or oral surgery and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. A narrative of necessity and a panoramic radiograph are required to determine if the scan meets criteria for approval.

If approved, one cone beam scan OR intraoral tomosynthesis image is allowed every 36 months.



K. Cephalometric Radiographs

Cephalometric radiographs are payable once every 36 months to an orthodontist or oral surgeon for diagnostic purposes related to orthodontic treatment only.

Diagnostic Casts

L. Diagnostic Casts

Diagnostic casts are payable to an orthodontist for diagnostic purposes related to orthodontic treatment only.

Diagnostic casts related to prosthetics are considered included in the allowance for the related billable service.



II. PREVENTIVE SERVICES

Summary

A. Preventive Summary

Preventive services include routine prophylaxis, topical application of fluoride, sealants, oral hygiene instructions and space maintenance therapy. The goal of providing routine preventive dental services is to maintain oral health and to prevent the need for more extensive dental procedures.

Prophylaxis

B. Prophylaxis (Cleaning)

Prophylaxis includes necessary scaling and polishing for the removal of plaque, calculus and stains from the tooth structures.

Reimbursement is routinely allowed once every 6 months. Beneficiaries with disabilities are eligible for prophylaxis as often as every three months.

Fluoride

C. Topical Application of Fluoride – Excluding Varnish

Topical Fluoride treatments in the form of gel, foam, and rinses applied in dental office as a caries preventive agent. Topical application of fluoride is allowed once every 6 months for patients up to age 20. Beneficiaries with disabilities (adults and children) are eligible for topical fluoride as often as every three months.

D. Topical Application of Fluoride Varnish

Fluoride varnish may be the preferred delivery method for individuals receiving head and neck radiation therapy and/or moderate to high caries risk individuals with a medical or cognitive impairment Xerostomia. For children under age 6 with a high caries risk, fluoride varnish can be applied up to 4 times in a 12 month period.

Sealants

E. Sealants

Sealants should be applied to occlusal surfaces (and buccal/lingual pits and grooves when applicable) of previously unrestored and caries free erupted first and second permanent molars. Tooth number is required. Buccal and lingual grooves are included in the reimbursement per tooth.

Sealants are indicated for the following:

- Caries prevention in pit and fissures on permanent molars
- Non-cavitated carious lesions
- Caries prevention in previously unrestored permanent first and second molars that exhibit no signs of occlusal or proximal caries



Sealants are not indicated for the following:

- In the presence of caries and interproximal lesions
- Extrinsic staining of pits and fissures
- For cavitated carious lesions

Sealants shall be limited to once every 60 months for patients between the ages of 5 and 15 (inclusive).

**Space
Maintainer**

F. Space Maintainers

A space maintainer is covered when indicated due to the premature loss of a primary tooth.

Space Maintainers are **contraindicated** for the following:

- When permanent tooth/teeth is/are close to eruption
- Severe crowding already exists Space has already been lost

Exclusions:

- Dental services that are not Necessary

Limitations:

- Lifetime reimbursement for a unilateral appliance is once per quadrant and for a bilateral appliance is once per arch.
- Any Space Maintainer adjustments are inclusive for 6 months.
- Only fixed appliances are reimbursable.
- Re-cementation is payable once every 12 months.
- Removal of a fixed appliance is limited to once per lifetime to an office other than that of the original rendering provider.
- Refer to the benefit brochure for applicable age limitations.

III. RESTORATIVE SERVICES

Summary

A. Restorative Summary

Restorative services most commonly include amalgam and composite restorations, post and core, and crown. Amalgam and composite restorations as well as stainless steel crowns do not require prior approval or application of clinical criteria. Prior authorization is recommended for all other covered restorative procedures as clinical criteria apply.

Repeated unexplained failure of any type of restoration will result in peer review and may necessitate removal of the dentist from the network and/or further disciplinary action.

Occlusal correction is considered part of the restoration and will not be separately billable or reimbursed.

Coverage Limitations and Exclusions

1. Restoration of the tooth must be determined essential by using the criteria for approval as defined in the section titled '**Scope of Coverage for Essential Services Programs**' on pages 2-3 of this manual
2. Dental Services that are not necessary
3. Any dental procedure performed solely for cosmetic/aesthetic reasons (cosmetic procedures are those procedures that improve physical appearance)
4. Any dental procedure not directly associated with dental disease
5. Clinical situations that can be effectively treated by a less costly, dental appropriate alternative procedure will be assigned a benefit based on the least costly procedure
6. All indirect restorations like crowns, bridge abutments, pontics, inlays, onlays, post and core are covered once per tooth per 60 consecutive months
7. Restorations placed solely for abrasion, attrition or for cosmetic purposes are beyond the scope of the program
8. Prefabricated resin crowns are allowed once every 24 months

Amalgam & Composite Restorations

B. Direct Restorations

Direct Restorations are indicated for the following:

- To replace tooth structure lost to caries or trauma
- To replace restorative material lost in the course of accessing pulp chamber for endodontic therapy
- To replace existing restorations that exhibit recurrent decay, fracture or marginal defects

In addition to the above, Glass Ionomer restorations are indicated for the following:



- When teeth cannot be isolated properly to allow placement of resin restorations
- As an alternative to resin sealants when the teeth cannot be properly isolated (patient cooperation, partially erupted teeth)
- Class I, II, III and V restorations on primary teeth
- Class III and V restorations on permanent teeth that cannot be isolated in high-risk patients
- As a caries control plan for high-risk patients using atraumatic techniques

Direct Restorations are not indicated for the following:

- Teeth with a hopeless prognosis
- Incipient enamel only lesions extending less than halfway to the dentino-enamel junction (DEJ)
- Primary teeth that are near exfoliation or less than 50% of the tooth root remains
- Composite resin restorations are not indicated for patients with heavy bruxism
- Composite resin restorations are not indicated for patients with extensive active caries, or high caries risk
- Amalgam restorations are not indicated for placement on teeth in which they will have contact with gold restorations

Total restoration per tooth by amalgam and/or composite is not to exceed the allowable fee for a four surface restoration within 24 months. Direct Restorations are expected to last a reasonable amount of time but no less than 24 months.

If an amalgam or composite restoration is billed on the same day as a post and core or a core build-up, separate reimbursement shall not be available for the restoration.

Bases, cements, liners, pulp caps, bonding agents and local anesthetic are included in the restorative service fees and shall not be reimbursed separately.

C. Protective Restoration

A protective restoration is indicated for the following:

- A. To relieve pain
- B. To promote healing
- C. To prevent further deterioration
- D. To retain tissue form

A protective restoration is not indicated for the following:

- As a liner or base for a definitive restoration
- Not for endodontic access closure
- Not for pulp capping
- As a definitive restoration

D. Interim Therapeutic Restoration - Primary Dentition Interim

Therapeutic restorations are indicated for the following:

- For very young, uncooperative or special needs patients

- When traditional tooth preparation for an Amalgam or Composite restoration is not feasible or must be postponed

E. Resin Infiltration of Incipient Smooth Surface Lesions

This service is typically used for treating white spots, demineralized enamel from orthodontic treatment, for aesthetic purposes. The code describes a proprietary product (Icon Smooth Surface Caries Infiltration, DMG America Ridgefield park, New Jersey) and will not be reimbursed due to insufficient evidence of efficacy.

Post and Core

F. Post and Core

A request for a post and core shall be automatically approved if the tooth has recent history of approved endodontic treatment. In the absence of recent endodontic treatment, the request requires clinical review of pre-operative radiographs and a full mouth treatment plan to substantiate medical necessity.

Consideration for post and core or core build-up is contingent upon the approval of the corresponding root canal and crown.

The determination of coverage will be based on the status of the individual tooth as well as the condition of the remaining teeth and supporting tissue. Factors considered include but are not limited to: medical necessity, periodontal condition, restorative prognosis, endodontic prognosis, missing teeth, integrity of the opposing dentition, and existing or proposed prosthesis in the same or opposing arch.

For a patient age 21 and over, a crown will not be routinely approved in association with an existing or proposed prosthesis in the same arch unless the tooth is a critical abutment or if functional replacement with less costly materials, including prosthetic replacement is possible.

Restoration of the tooth must be determined essential by using the criteria for approval as defined in the section titled '**Scope of Coverage for Essential Services Programs**' on pages 2-3 of this manual.

Payment for a post and core includes any adjustments or re-cementation necessary during the six month period following its initial placement.

Reimbursement for a post and core is available once every 60 months.

Crowns

G. Crowns

A request for a crown shall be automatically approved if the tooth has recent history of approved endodontic treatment. In the absence of recent endodontic treatment, the request requires clinical review of pre-operative radiographs and a full mouth treatment plan to substantiate medical necessity.

Payment for a crown includes any adjustments or re-cementation necessary during the

six month period following its initial placement.

The determination of coverage will be based on the status of the individual tooth as well as the condition of the remaining teeth and supporting tissue. Factors considered include but are not limited to: medical necessity, periodontal condition, restorative prognosis, endodontic prognosis, missing teeth, integrity of the opposing dentition, and existing or proposed prosthesis in the same or opposing arch.

Restoration of the tooth must be determined essential by using the criteria for approval as defined in the section titled '**Scope of Coverage for Essential Services Programs**' on pages 2-3 of this manual.

For a patient age 21 and over, a crown will not be routinely approved in association with an existing or proposed prosthesis in the same arch unless the tooth is a critical abutment or if functional replacement with less costly materials, including prosthetic replacement is possible.

Damaged teeth should be restored using procedures that remove the least amount of tooth structure necessary to restore normal function.

Crowns are indicated for the following:

- If restoring the tooth is determined essential by using the criteria for approval as defined in the section titled '**Scope of Coverage for Essential Services Programs**' on pages 2-3 of this manual.
- Extensive caries or tooth fractures
- To replace large defective restorations
- Complete cusp fractures
- Endodontically treated teeth (unless only need to restore the access opening on an anterior tooth) that are asymptomatic with a good apical seal
- Symptomatic "cracked tooth syndrome" (not enamel craze lines)
- Full coverage restoration of a primary tooth without a permanent successor

Crowns are not indicated for the following:

- If a more conservative means of restoration is acceptable
 - If the buccal and lingual walls are intact
- If root resorption is present
- For teeth with untreated/uncontrolled periodontal disease or periapical pathology Unstable, active caries
- Poor oral hygiene
- Teeth that do not have a favorable Crown/root ratio



Coverage Limitations:

1. Clinical situations that can be effectively treated by a less costly, dental appropriate alternative procedure will be assigned a benefit based on the least costly procedure
2. Limited to 1 restoration per natural or prosthetic tooth per consecutive 60 months without regard to the material used or type of restoration placed (standard crown, inlay, onlay, pontic, bridge abutment, or implant crown)
3. A crown will not be approved if the tooth can be reasonably restored with filling

Exclusions:

4. Replacement of indirect restorations if damage or breakage was directly related to provider error. This type of replacement is the responsibility of the dental provider. If replacement is due to patient non-compliance, the patient is liable for the cost of replacement.
 5. Fixed restoration procedures for complete oral rehabilitation reconstruction
 6. Procedures related to the reconstruction of a patient's correct vertical dimension of occlusion and/or TMJ
 7. Laboratory based Crowns for the purposes of provisional splinting
-

IV. ENDODONTIC SERVICES

Summary

A. Endodontic Summary

Endodontic services most commonly include pulpotomy, root canal therapy, retreatment of previous root canal therapy, and apicoectomy. Clinical criteria apply to all covered endodontic procedures with exception of pulpotomy, therefore prior authorization for these services is recommended. Noted patterns of endodontic treatment failure will result in peer review and may necessitate removal of the dentist from the network and/or further disciplinary action.

Restoration of the tooth must be determined essential by using the criteria for approval as defined in the section titled '**Scope of Coverage for Essential Services Programs**' on pages 2-3 of this manual.

When endodontic therapy is indicated in an urgent situation, it is expected that appropriate palliative measures shall be initiated. Please contact Healthplex with any questions related to coverage and/or to request an expedited prior authorization.

If endodontic therapy is rendered in the absence of a prior authorization, please submit your claim with recent pre-operative and post-operative radiographs for retrospective review.

Endodontic therapy is indicated for the following:

- If restoring is determined essential by using the criteria for approval as defined in the section titled '**Scope of Coverage for Essential Services Programs**' on pages 2-3 of this manual.
- A restorable, mature, completely developed permanent or primary tooth with irreversible pulpitis, necrotic pulp, or frank vital pulpal exposure
- Teeth with radiographic periapical pathology
- Primary teeth without a permanent successor
- When needed for prosthetic rehabilitation

Endodontic therapy is not indicated for the following:

- Teeth with a poor long-term prognosis
 - Teeth with inadequate bone support or advanced or untreated periodontal disease
 - Teeth with incompletely formed root apices
-

Pulpotomy

B. Pulpotomy

The aim of pulpotomy is to maintain the vitality of the remaining portion by means of an adequate dressing. It is not to be construed as the first stage of root canal therapy. Therefore, if root canal is performed by the same provider, any allowance paid shall be deducted from the fee for root canal therapy.

Reimbursement for a pulpotomy is available once per tooth for a patient up to age 21.

Therapeutic Pulpotomy is indicated for the following:

- Exposed vital pulps or irreversible pulpitis of primary teeth where there is a reasonable period of retention expected (approximately one year)
- As an emergency procedure in permanent teeth until root canal treatment can be accomplished
- As an interim procedure for permanent teeth with immature root formation to allow continued root development

Therapeutic Pulpotomy is not indicated for the following:

- Primary teeth with insufficient root structure, internal resorption, furcal Perforation or periradicular pathosis that may jeopardize the permanent successor
- Removal of pulp apical to the dentinocemental junction

Pulpal Therapy C. Pulpal Therapy

Pulpal therapy shall include pulpectomy, cleaning, and filling of canals with resorbable material.

A post-operative radiograph is requested upon completion. If canals are not sufficiently filled to the apex, benefit for pulpotomy will be allowed.

Reimbursement for a pulpal therapy is available once per tooth. Refer to the benefit brochure for applicable age limitations.

Root Canal Therapy D. Root Canal Therapy

Reimbursement for root canal therapy shall include pulpal extirpation, endodontic treatment to include complete filling of the canal(s) with permanent material, all necessary radiographs during treatment, a radiograph demonstrating proper completion, and follow-up care.

The acceptable standard employed for endodontic procedures dictates that the canal(s) be completely filled apically and laterally. In cases where the root canal filling does not meet acceptable standards, Healthplex reserves the right to require that the procedure be redone at no additional cost. Refund may be requested for any reimbursement made for an inadequate service.

Requests for endodontic therapy or retreatment require clinical review of pre-operative radiographs and a full mouth treatment plan. The determination of coverage will be based on the status of the individual tooth as well as the condition of the remaining teeth and supporting tissue. Factors considered include but are not limited to:

- ◆ Medical necessity
- ◆ Periodontal condition
- ◆ Restorative prognosis
- ◆ Missing teeth
- ◆ Presence of root resorption
- ◆ Integrity of the opposing dentition
- ◆ Existing or proposed prosthesis in the same or opposing arch

Restoration of the tooth must be determined essential by using the criteria for approval as defined in the section titled '**Scope of Coverage for Essential Services Programs**' on pages 2-3 of this manual.

For a patient age 21 and over, endodontic therapy will not be routinely approved in association with an existing or proposed prosthesis in the same arch unless the tooth is a critical abutment or if functional replacement with less costly materials, including prosthetic replacement is possible.

For a patient age 21 and over, molar endodontic therapy will be considered only in those instances where the tooth in question is a critical abutment for an existing functional prosthesis and when the tooth cannot be extracted and replaced with a new prosthesis.

Reimbursement for root canal therapy and/or retreatment is once per tooth.

Apicoectomy

E. Apicoectomy

Please refer to clinical criteria for endodontic therapy listed in the root canal section above.

Apicoectomy will be considered only if one or more of the following conditions exist:

- If restoration of the tooth is determined essential by using the criteria for approval as defined in the section titled '**Scope of Coverage for Essential Services Programs**' on pages 2-3 of this manual.
- Overfilled canal (previously treated tooth) or displaced root canal filling irritating periapical tissues
- Canal cannot be filled properly due to excessive root curvature or calcification, fractured root tip, broken instrument in canal, or perforation of the apical third of canal
- Periapical pathology not resolved by previous endodontic therapy
- A post which cannot be removed.

Reimbursement for apicoectomy is once per tooth

Apexification

F. Apexification

Requests for reimbursement for apexification require clinical review of pre-operative radiographs to substantiate medical necessity. Factors such as restorative prognosis and presence of open apices are considered for determination of coverage.

Apexification/Recalcification is indicated for the following:

- Incomplete apical closure in a permanent tooth root
- External root resorption or when the possibility of external root resorption exists
- Necrotic pulp, irreversible pulpitis, or periapical lesion
- For prevention or arrest of resorption
- Perforations or root fractures that do not communicate with oral cavity

Apexification/Recalcification is not indicated for the following:

- Tooth with a completely closed apex

Reimbursement for apexification is once per tooth.

V. PERIODONTIC SERVICES

Summary

A. Periodontic Summary

Clinical criteria apply to all covered periodontic procedures, therefore prior authorization for these services is recommended.

When periodontal services are indicated, the provider must keep on file documentation of the need for treatment, including a copy of the pre-treatment evaluation of the periodontium, a general description of the tissues (i.e. color, shape, and consistency), the location and measurement of periodontal pockets, the description of the type and amount of bone loss, the periodontal diagnosis, the amount and location of subgingival calculus deposits, and tooth mobility.

The most common covered periodontic services are periodontal scaling & root planing and gingivectomy/gingivoplasty. Clinical criteria apply to all covered periodontic procedures, therefore prior authorization for these services is recommended.

When periodontal services are indicated, the provider must keep on file documentation of the need for treatment, including a copy of the pre-treatment evaluation of the periodontium, a general description of the tissues (i.e. color, shape, and consistency), the location and measurement of periodontal pockets, the description of the type and amount of bone loss, the periodontal diagnosis, the amount and location of subgingival calculus deposits, and tooth mobility

Exclusions:

1. Any Dental Procedure performed solely for cosmetic/aesthetic reasons
2. Any Dental Procedure not directly associated with dental disease
3. Procedures that are considered to be Experimental, Investigational or Unproven
4. Dental Services that are not Necessary
5. Periodontal procedures related to implant treatment will not be covered if the corresponding implant is not covered
6. Periodontal surgery (except for gingivectomy/gingivoplasty), which is not within the scope of the services covered by the program
7. Periodontal splinting is not covered

Periodontal scaling & root planning (SRP)

B. Scaling & Root Planing

Periodontal scaling & root planing is indicated for patients with moderate to severe periodontal disease and is therapeutic not prophylactic in nature. It involves instrumentation of the crown and root surfaces to remove plaque and calculus.

Current periodontal charting in conjunction with appropriate radiographs should be submitted for review. Factors such as pocket depth and bone loss shall be considered. For approval of the requested quadrant, there must be a minimum of one pocket of at least 5mm or one pocket of at least 5mm with evidence of bone loss of more than 2mm from



the CEJ (cemento/enamel junction).

If less than 4 teeth are present in the quadrant, the allowance shall be prorated.

Please note that your periodontal charting must be an accurate representation of the patient’s current condition. Noted patterns of inconsistency between periodontal charting and radiographs and/or dental history will result in peer review and may necessitate removal of the dentist from the network and/or further disciplinary action.

Only two quadrants are payable on a single date of service. Reimbursement for each quadrant is available once every 24 months.

Periodontal Surgery

C. Periodontal Surgery

Covered periodontal surgery includes gingivectomy/gingivoplasty only. This service is reimbursable solely for the correction of severe hyperplasia or hypertrophy associated with drug therapy, hormonal disturbances or congenital defects.

Current periodontal charting and/or photos in conjunction with appropriate radiographs and a narrative substantiating the causative factor(s) should be submitted for clinical review for prior authorization.

If less than 4 teeth are present in the quadrant, a partial quadrant will allowed.

If approval criteria is met, the service is covered once per quadrant every 12 months.

Bone Graft & Ancillary Procedures

D. Bone Grafts and Related Ancillary Procedures

Covered procedure codes will only be approved if a corresponding implant has been approved. as meeting the criteria for medical necessity. Please refer to the criteria within the ‘Implants’ section of this manual.

Periodontal Maintenance

E. Periodontal Maintenance

This procedure is considered duplicative of a standard cleaning (prophylaxis). Enrollees are allowed to have two periodontal maintenance procedures every 12 months OR once cleaning every 6 months.

VI. PROSTHETIC SERVICES

Summary

A. Prosthetic Summary

Prosthetic services most commonly include removable dentures. Clinical criteria apply to all covered prosthetics without regard to material, therefore prior authorization for these services is recommended. Full and/or partial dentures are covered when they are required to alleviate a serious health condition or one that affects employability.

Fixed partial dentures are not generally considered within the scope of services covered by the program. If extenuating circumstances exist, please submit a prior authorization request with a narrative for consideration.

Implants shall be considered when the stringent medical necessity criteria is met and shall only be considered if other covered functional alternatives for prosthetic replacement will not correct the patient's dental condition.

In situations where it is impractical to obtain pre-operative radiographs on a patient in a nursing home or long term care facility, a written narrative by the dentist stating that the patient is in a physical and mental state sufficient to function with dentures is required for authorization.

Claims are not to be submitted until the prosthetics are completed and delivered to the patient.

Approval for prosthetic services like dentures is generally available once per arch every 8 years or consecutive 96 months. Consideration of replacement shall be based on documented medical necessity and individual circumstances.

Removable Prosthetic Services

B. Removable Prosthetics

Dentures, both partial and complete, shall be considered when masticatory function is likely to impair the general health of the patient or when the existing prosthesis is at least 8 years old and unserviceable or if recent extensive physiological change (i.e. recent extraction of 4 or more teeth, marked weight loss, trauma, etc.) has occurred. Exceptions based on medical necessity for individual factors shall be considered on a case by case basis.

Requests for replacement dentures whether unserviceable, lost, stolen, or broken prior to 8 years must include a letter from the patient's physician and dentist which explains the specific circumstances that necessitate replacement of the denture. The letter must clearly indicate how the denture(s) will alleviate the patient's serious health condition or improve employability. If replacement dentures are requested within the 8 year period after they have already been replaced once, the supporting documentation must include an explanation of preventative measures instituted to



alleviate the need for further replacements.

C. Complete dentures

- ◆ If initial placement for a non-edentulous arch, a full mouth treatment plan and preoperative radiographs are required to substantiate medical necessity.
- ◆ If initial placement for an edentulous arch, the request shall be automatically approved.
- ◆ For replacement of an existing complete denture, prior insertion date and reason for replacement are needed for a determination of coverage.

D. Partial dentures

- ◆ If initial placement, a full mouth treatment plan and preoperative radiographs are required to substantiate medical necessity.
- ◆ For replacement of an existing partial denture, a full mouth treatment plan, preoperative radiographs, prior insertion date and reason for replacement are needed for a determination of coverage.
- ◆ Please note that all necessary restorative work must be completed before fabrication of a partial denture.

The determination of coverage will be based on:

- ◆ Radiographic evaluation of the status of the dentition as well as appropriateness of the proposed treatment plan (i.e. planned extractions, prognosis of remaining teeth, etc.).
- ◆ Partial dentures will be allowed if there is at least one missing maxillary anterior tooth or two missing mandibular teeth or if there are less than eight natural or prosthetic posterior teeth in occlusion (four maxillary and four mandibular teeth in functional contact with each other).
- ◆ Abutments for a partial denture must be free of active periodontal disease and have adequate bone support.
- ◆ Individual psychosocial factors shall be considered on a case by case basis

Partial dentures can be considered for patients age 15 and above. An interim prosthesis (codes D5820/D5821) can be considered for patients between ages 5 to 15.

E. Immediate Dentures

Immediate prosthetic appliances are not covered. It is expected that tissues will be allowed to heal for a minimum for 4-6 weeks prior to taking the final impression(s).

F. Implant Supported Dentures

An implant supported prosthetic shall be considered using the medical necessity criteria related to the implants. Please refer to the Implant section below.

**Denture
Repairs,
Relines, and
Adjustments****G. Repair/Reline/Adjust**

Payment for a new prosthesis includes any adjustments necessary during the 6 month period following delivery.

If the reimbursement for any combination of repairs, relines, and/or adjustments shall exceed 50% of the cost of a new denture, please submit a prior authorization request for consideration of a new denture.

Reimbursement for all repairs, chairside relines and adjustments are available once every 12 months. Reimbursement for indirect relines are available once every 24 months, for direct relines every 36 months, and rebases once every 48 months.

H. Rebase and Reline Procedures

Denture Rebasings is indicated for the following:

- When changes to the residual ridge result in loss of denture stability, retention, or occlusal disharmony
- When the base has fractured or cracked

Denture Rebasings is not indicated for the following:

- When the prosthesis is broken or worn to the extent that replacement is warranted
- When the occlusion or structural integrity of the denture teeth are no longer functional
- When a Reline is sufficient

Denture Relining is indicated for the following:

- When changes to the residual ridge result in loss of denture stability, retention, or occlusal disharmony

Denture Rebasings and Relining are not indicated for the following:

- When the prosthesis is broken or worn to the extent that it is no longer functional and replacing the appliance is warranted
- Unresolved soft tissue hyperplasia or stomatitis

Coverage Limitations

- Limited to Relining/Rebasing performed more than 6 months after the initial insertion

**Tissue
Conditioning****I. Tissue Conditioning**

Reimbursement is available once every 36 months.

**Implant
Services****J. Implants**

Dental implants will be covered by Medicaid when **medically necessary and only when other covered functional alternatives for prosthetic replacement will not correct the patient's dental condition**. Prior approval requests for implants must include:

- Accurate pretreatment charting;
- Complete treatment plan addressing all areas of pathology;
- Interarch distance;
- Number, type and location of implants to be placed;
- Design and type of planned restoration(s)/prosthetic(s);

A letter from the patient's physician must explain how implants will alleviate the patient's medical condition; Physicians documentation must include a list of all medications currently being taken and all conditions currently being treated

- A letter from the patient's dentist must explain why other covered functional alternatives for prosthetic replacement will not correct the patient's dental condition and why the patient requires implants; and
- Current, diagnostic x-rays allowing evaluation of the entire dentition.

In the event that an implant is approved, other necessary services required for the dental implant surgery like bone grafting will considered on a case by case basis.

If bone grafting is necessary, there must be a 4-6 month healing period before the implant can be placed.

The request for the implant (code D6010) will be re-evaluated 4-6 months after placement via x-rays or CT scan **prior to** authorization of abutment(s), crown(s), or denture(s).

Treatment on an existing implant will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

**Fixed
Bridgework****K. Bridgework**

Fixed partial dentures are not generally considered within the scope of services covered by the program. If extenuating circumstances exist, please submit a prior authorization request with a narrative for consideration.

VII. ORAL AND MAXILLOFACIAL SURGICAL SERVICES

Summary

A. Oral Surgery Summary

Oral Surgery procedures most commonly include extractions, alveoloplasty, and biopsies.

Reimbursement requests for all oral surgery procedures with exception of non-surgical extractions require clinical review of applicable diagnostics (i.e. pre-operative radiographs, biopsy report, and/or narrative) to substantiate medical necessity.

Oral surgical services (i.e. extractions or exposures) for orthodontic purposes are covered only if the corresponding orthodontic treatment has been approved by Healthplex.

Oral surgical services for implant purposes are covered only if the corresponding implant treatment has been approved by Healthplex.

Extractions

B. Extractions

Removal of tooth, soft tissue associated with the root, curettage of the socket, local anesthesia, required suturing, and routine post-operative care are included in the fees for extractions and will not be reimbursed separately. Excision of tissue, particularly cyst removal, requires supporting documentation when billed as an adjunct to tooth extraction.

Extraction of impacted teeth should only be undertaken when conditions arising from such impactions warrant their removal. Extraction of asymptomatic teeth or those where medical/dental necessity cannot be demonstrated shall be disallowed.

Coverage is based on medical necessity and the anatomical position of the tooth.

Surgical extraction of an erupted tooth is indicated for any of the following:

- No clinical tooth is visible in the mouth
 - The fracture of tooth or roots during a non-surgical extraction procedure
 - Erupted teeth with unusual root morphology (dilacerations, cementosis)
 - Erupted teeth with developmental abnormalities that would make non-surgical extraction unsafe or cause harm
 - When fused to adjacent tooth
 - In the presence of periapical lesions
 - For maxillary posterior teeth whose roots extend into the maxillary sinus
 - When tooth has been crowned or treated endodontically
-

Excision and Biopsy**C. Excision**

Excision of tissue, particularly cyst removal, requires supporting documentation when billed as an adjunct to tooth extraction.

Excision and biopsy submitted on the same day is considered a duplicate service. Benefit only for the excision shall be considered.

D. Biopsy

Removal or biopsy of a periapical granuloma, dentigerous or odontogenic cyst is generally considered an integral part of the extraction and is not separately billable. Any claim for a biopsy must be accompanied with a biopsy report.

Incision and Drainage**E. Incision and Drainage**

Incision and drainage procedures include the insertion and removal of drain(s). When submitted on the same day as another definitive service in the same quadrant, supporting documentation (i.e. radiographs or treatment record) is required for consideration for separate reimbursement.

Alveoloplasty**F. Alveoloplasty**

When submitted in conjunction with surgical extractions in the same quadrant, alveoloplasty is considered included in the allowance for the surgical service and not reimbursable as a separate procedure.

If submitted without extractions in the same quadrant, a narrative substantiating medical necessity is required.

If alveoloplasty is performed for less than 4 teeth or tooth spaces in the quadrant, a partial quadrant will be allowed.

Other Surgical Services**G. Other**

For all other covered oral surgical services, please submit pre-operative radiographs with a narrative substantiating medical necessity for consideration.

VIII. ORTHODONTIC SERVICES

Summary

A. Orthodontic Summary

All orthodontic services must be prior authorized and must be rendered by an orthodontic specialist. Limited or Interceptive orthodontic services will be considered for the treatment of the primary or transitional dentition. Limited or Comprehensive orthodontic services will be considered for treatment of the transitional, adolescent or permanent dentition.

For comprehensive orthodontic treatment, if the total score on the HLD Assessment Tool is equal to or greater than 26, the pre-orthodontic treatment work-up can proceed. If the total score on the HLD Assessment Tool is less than 26 points, please submit documentation of the extenuating functional difficulties and/or medical anomaly with the submission.

Orthodontic treatment is only covered if treatment that meets the criteria for approval is started prior to the patient's 21st birthday.

The pre-orthodontic treatment visit does not require prior authorization. Reimbursement is available once per 12 months prior to initiation of orthodontic treatment and includes the consultation; therefore, consultation will not be reimbursed separately.

Providers will generally be reimbursed for orthodontic treatment that meets the criteria for approval at a negotiated case rate. The provider shall continue a course of treatment to completion and will be reimbursed the case rate for completed treatment without regard for the length of time necessary to complete such treatment plan.

Limited Orthodontic Treatment

B. Limited

If within the scope of coverage, consideration is given for treatment with a limited objective, not involving the entire dentition. It may be directed at the only existing problem or at only one aspect of a larger problem in which a decision is made to defer or forego more comprehensive therapy.

For prior authorization the following shall be submitted:

- ◆ Narrative of clinical findings and treatment plan;
- ◆ Diagnostic photographs;
- ◆ Diagnostic radiographs of the entire dentition;

Reimbursement is limited to once per lifetime for an approved course of orthodontic treatment.

Interceptive

C. Interceptive

Orthodontic Treatment

If within the scope of coverage, consideration is given when interceptive orthodontic treatment may eliminate the need for or reduce the severity or duration of comprehensive orthodontic treatment. Approval for the interceptive treatment when not part of the comprehensive case will include all appliances, insertion, treatment visits, repairs, removal and retention. As a result, the provider shall complete the case even if eligibility is terminated.

For prior authorization requests the following shall be submitted:

- ◆ Narrative of clinical findings for dysfunction or deformity and dental diagnosis;
- ◆ Orthodontic treatment plan to include description of appliance(s);
- ◆ Diagnostic photographs;
- ◆ Diagnostic panoramic radiographs and cephalometric films with tracing (when applicable); and,

If comprehensive treatment is required following a course of interceptive treatment, a period of 12 to 18 months should be allowed prior to requesting comprehensive treatment for stabilization of the result.

Reimbursement is limited to once per lifetime for an approved course of orthodontic treatment.

Comprehensive Orthodontic Treatment**D. Comprehensive**

Comprehensive orthodontic treatment will only be considered for the adolescent or permanent dentition.

For prior authorization requests the following shall be submitted:

- ◆ The completed HLD Assessment Tool;
- ◆ Narrative of clinical findings for dysfunction or deformity and dental diagnosis;
- ◆ The comprehensive orthodontic treatment plan;
- ◆ Diagnostic cast or digital study models;
- ◆ Diagnostic photographs;
- ◆ Diagnostic panoramic radiographs and cephalometric films with tracing (when applicable);
- ◆ For orthognathic surgical cases: the surgical consult, complete treatment plan and approval for surgical treatment with a statement signed by the parent/guardian and recipient that they understand and accept the proposed treatment is necessary; and,
- ◆ Medical diagnosis (when applicable).

Please note: All needed dental treatment (preventive and restorative) should be completed prior to initiating orthodontic treatment.

In addition to submission requirements already noted, the following must be met:

- ◆ The prior authorization request to start a case must include treatment visits. Treatment visits will be considered for 4 quarterly intervals. The maximum number of treatment visits to be considered on any one prior authorization

is 4;

- ◆ After the initial 4 quarterly treatment visits, recertification for the remainder of the treatment is necessary. Please submit current progress photographs with a copy of the treatment record for review.
- ◆ The case start date is considered to be the banding date which must occur within six (6) months of approval;
- ◆ The case fee includes active and retention phase of treatment and is based on eligibility and age limitations.

Documentation for Completion of Comprehensive Cases – Final Records

Attestation of case completion must be submitted on the provider's letterhead to document that active treatment had a favorable outcome and that the case is ready for retention. Procedure code D8680, orthodontic retention shall be submitted on the visit to remove the bands and place the case in retention.

Prior Authorization for Orthodontic Services Transferred or Started Outside of the Program

For continuation of care for transfer cases, a prior authorization must be submitted to request the remaining treatment visits for case completion. The following must be submitted with the prior authorization:

- ◆ A copy of the initial orthodontic case approval if applicable;
 - ◆ A copy of the orthodontic treatment notes if available from provider that started the case;
 - ◆ Recent diagnostic photographs; and,
 - ◆ The date when active treatment was started and the expected number of months for active treatment.
-

IX. ADJUNCTIVE GENERAL SERVICES

Summary **A. Summary**

Adjunctive general services most commonly include general anesthesia, intravenous sedation, consultations and palliative services provided for relief of dental pain.

Palliative Treatment **B. Palliative**

Reimbursement is per visit and is generally limited to once every 3 months and is not separately payable if rendered on the same day as another payable procedure other than diagnostic services.

Please include tooth number or area and a description of the procedure rendered.

Please note: Follow-up visits related to previous treatment are not billable and therefore shall not be considered for separate reimbursement.

Intravenous Conscious Sedation and General Anesthesia **C. Sedation**

Intravenous conscious sedation and general anesthesia are payable only if the provider holds a current certification and licensure to administer such anesthesia per state and federal guidelines.

For cases requiring intravenous sedation or general anesthesia, providers must retain the anesthesia record which documents time and amounts of drugs administered, pulse rate, blood pressure, respiration, etc. in the patient's treatment record.

Healthplex recommends that providers exercise professional judgment when diagnosing the necessity for administration of intravenous sedation or general anesthesia. Apprehension alone is not typically considered a medical necessity.

Anesthesia/sedation procedures within the scope of coverage will be allowed only if the corresponding dental treatment has been approved by Healthplex.

Consultation (D9310) **D. Consultation**

A consultation includes an oral evaluation and will only be reimbursed to a specialist.

Reimbursement for a consultation is generally limited to once per 3 months (per treatment plan).

Occlusal Guard **E. Occlusal Guard**

One occlusal guard is allowed every 12 months.
