

Medical Policy: UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT

Benefit Type: Medi-Cal

Original Date: July 24, 2014 | **Last Review Date:** May 15, 2026 | **Effective Date:** June 4, 2026

Policy Statement

In accordance with the state Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) has developed evidence based medical necessity criteria resource guide for reviewing requests for clinical services.

GCHP and its contracted providers will adhere to the following criteria when reviewing for medical necessity:

- GCHP follows DHCS Medi-Cal Provider Manual guidelines as its primary clinical decision-making resource.
- In the absence of DHCS Medi-Cal Provider Manual guidelines for a requested service, treatment or device, GCHP will apply MCG decision support guidelines.
- In the absence of MCG decision support guidelines for a requested service, treatment or device, GCHP will apply UpToDate guidelines.
- In the absence of Medi-Cal, MCG, or UpToDate guidelines, GCHP will use resources described in the Plan's Decision-Making Resources Guideline.

In coverage situations where coverage criteria are not fully established in applicable Medi-Cal Provider Manual, MCG, or UpToDate guidelines, GCHP applies the resources described in the Clinical Decision-Making Policy.

Purpose

To outline the guidelines and criteria applied during the utilization management process for review of medical necessity.

Health Equity Statement

GCHP is committed to the vision in which all Californians equitably benefit from resources and systems that give everyone the opportunity to achieve their optimal health, resulting in communities that thrive.

GCHP adopts the American Medical Association (AMA) and DHCS commitments to whole-person centered, evidence-based and integrated strategies to advance health equity, addressing social and structural drivers of health. Decisions are therefore based on the evidence-based criteria as well as considerations of the member's social and structural drivers of health, and considerations that the decisions create no harm nor exacerbate existing harms.^{1,2}

Definitions

Evidence-Based Guidelines (EBG): Systematically developed nationally recognized clinical guidelines to guide healthcare decisions with the aim of optimizing patient care.

MCG: Clinical guidelines grounded in the latest published scientific evidence and regularly updated to reflect continual advances in clinical knowledge.

UpToDate: Web-based clinical decision support resource, which uses physician authors, editors, and peer reviewers to perform comprehensive literature reviews and formulate evidence-based treatment recommendations.

References

1. [American Medical Association \(AMA\). \(2023, December 21\). *Ama's Center for Health Equity Mission and Guiding Principles*.](#)
2. Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Comprehensive Quality Strategy. (PDF), published Feb. 4, 2022.
3. Clinical Decision-Making Policy

Disclaimer

Guidelines provide references identified at the time of review. New guidelines or medical literature may emerge and/or been published. Treating healthcare professionals are solely responsible for diagnosis, treatment and medical guidance. GCHP regularly reviews and updates these guidelines to provide the most current information.

History

MEDICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE GUIDELINE HISTORY			
Adopted By MAC	Reapproved	Revised	Retired
July 24, 2014			
	July 30, 2015		
		July 28, 2016	
	July 27, 2017		
	July 26, 2018		
	July 25, 2019		
	July 23, 2020		
	July 22, 2021		
	July 21, 2022		
	July 20, 2023		
		July 18, 2024	
MAC Sunset on July 18, 2024			
CREDENTIALING PEER REVIEW COMMITTEE (C/PRC) GUIDELINE HISTORY			
Adopted By CPRC	Reapproved	Revised	Retired
	June 5, 2025		
		June 6, 2026	