5101:3-10-24 **Speech generating devices (SGD).**

Unless otherwise specified, the licensing of persons authorized to conduct a formal evaluation of a consumer's communication and related cognitive and physical abilities for the purpose of dispensing an SGD to a medicaid consumer is administered according to Chapter 4753. of the Revised Code. Any provider seeking reimbursement for this service must meet the provisions contained within Chapter 4753. of the Revised Code in order to be eligible for reimbursement for services provided.

(A) Definitions

(1) Speech generating device (SGD): Any electronic aid or device approved for use as an SGD that provides external assistance for communication and is an integral part of a speech-language pathology treatment plan for a consumer with a communication disability who is unable to satisfy his or her basic communication needs.

Basic communication needs are defined as a consumer's ability to communicate needs and wants, transfer information, achieve social closeness, and demonstrate social etiquette.

(2) Speech: The ability to vocalize by coordinating the muscles controlling the vocal apparatus (lips, tongue, jaw and vocal folds). It is the mechanical aspect of oral communication.

(3) Language: Refers to symbolic communication and permits the ability to converse, comprehend, repeat, read, and write. Language ability depends on central processing for either comprehension or formulation for expressing the sounds and symbols of prepositional communication. Difficulty in articulation or vocalization implies a speech disorder, whereas the inability to find words, comprehend, read, or write is indicative of a language disorder.

(4) Speech language pathologist (SLP): The SLP is a licensed health professional, educated at the graduate level in the study of human communication, its development and its disorders. The SLP must comply with all applicable federal and state licensing laws.

(5) Date of service (DOS): The effective DOS for this rule is defined as the date that the consumer is evaluated by the provider for the use of an SGD device.

(B) Coverage determination

(1) Before the delivery of the SGD, the consumer must have a documented face-to-face evaluation of his or her communication abilities by an SLP. The SLP performing the consumer evaluation may not be an employee or have a financial relationship with the supplier of the SGD. The formal, written evaluation must include all of the following elements:

(a) Current communication impairment, including the type, severity, language skills, and anticipated course of the impairment;

(b) An assessment of whether the consumer's daily communication needs could be met using other natural or aided modes of communication;

(c) Clinical documentation supporting the assessment that the consumer possesses the linguistic capability to formulate a message independently;

(d) Clinical documentation supporting the assessment that the consumer possesses cognitive and physical abilities to effectively use the selected device and any accessories to communicate;

(e) A description of the functional communication goals expected to be achieved and treatment options;

(f) Rationale for selection of a specific device and any accessories;

(g) Demonstration that the consumer possesses a comprehensive treatment plan that includes a training schedule for the selected device;

(h) For any subsequent upgrade to a previously issued SGD, information regarding the functional benefit to the consumer of the upgrade compared to the initially provided SGD to include a full device description of the most current SGD being requested;

(i) A full disclosure of any SGD equipment that the consumer already possesses to include a statement as to why the current equipment does not currently meet the consumer's needs which is supported by clinical documentation from the consumer's medical record;

(j) Documentation supporting the medical necessity of any accessory or add-on equipment, supplies or SGD features being requested;

(k) The evaluation must be signed and dated by all parties of the consumer's evaluation team to include professional licensure numbers;

(l) The consumer's medical condition is one resulting in a severe expressive speech impairment that is supported by documentation in the consumer's medical record;

(m) The consumer's speaking needs cannot be met using natural communication methods;

(n) Other forms of speech impairment treatment have been considered and

ruled out; and

(o) The consumer's speech impairment and communication ability will benefit clinically from the device ordered.

(2) A copy of the SLP's written evaluation and recommendation must be forwarded to the consumer's treating prescriber before the device is ordered and kept in the consumer's medical records.

(3) Mounting brackets used in association with the installation of the SGD to a consumer's wheelchair can be billed to the department for separate reimbursement using the appropriate billing codes for these devices.

(C) Eye control SGD accessory

(1) Eye control technology for use with an SGD commonly employs infrared illumination of the pupil or cornea with digital camera tracking integrated into the SGD.

(2) Eye control technology for an SGD must only be considered as a last choice after all other methods of operating the SGD device have been evaluated and determined by the evaluating SLP not to meet the consumers needs. The SLP must document on the prior authorization form and in the consumer's medical record that alternative SGD control devices other than eye control were evaluated before requesting eye control technology for a specific SGD device.

(3) The consumer must have a specific documented medical necessity that supports the request for an eye control SGD accessory including but not limited to the following:

(a) Consumer has a documented history of a brainstem stroke;

(b) Consumer has Guillain Barre syndrome;

(c) Consumer is in the final stages of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS);

(d) Consumer has a documented occurrence of a severe traumatic brain injury that resulted in the complete loss of head movement.

(4) Approval for an eye control SGD accessory for a consumer is based on medical necessity as determined by the department.

(5) In order for a request for an eye control SGD accessory to be considered the provider must document that the consumer is able to use an eye control SGD accessory independently and successfully in the environments and situations in which the consumer is using the SGD device.

(6) Any SGD eye control accessory associated with the consumer's use of an SGD device will not be reimbursed by the department for an amount greater than five thousand six hundred dollars .

(7) The consumer must be provided with the most cost-effective SGD available to meet the medical needs of the consumer.

(D) Non-coverage determination

(1) Claims for more than one SGD at a time per qualifying consumer will be denied as not medically necessary.

(2) Environmental control devices are not separately reimbursable.

(3) Any non-medical software, accessory, application or hardware to include internet capabilities used in conjunction or compatible with the SGD are not separately reimbursable without the department's prior authorization.

(4) Personal computers and related hardware are not reimbursable unless the system has been adapted for use primarily as an SGD. The documentation supporting this adaptation must be maintained in the provider's records and on the prior authorization form.

(5) There will be no separate billing of any interfaces, printers, printer paper, cables, adapters, interconnects, or any other standard component necessary for the accessory to interface with any SGD in conjunction with the initial dispensing of this equipment to the consumer that is non-medical in nature without the department's prior authorization.

(6) Consumer training expenses related to the operation of the SGD are not separately reimbursable.

(E) Authorization

(1) The following documentation must be submitted for prior authorization (PA) before reimbursement for an initial SGD will be considered:

(a) A fully completed and legible JFS 02924 "Certificate of Medical Necessity/Prescription Speech Generating Device (SGD) Initial Certification" (appendix A to this rule) that is signed by the applicable licensed providers and dated no more than ninety days before submission for prior authorization; and

(b) Any other documentation required or requested by the department.

(2) Documentation for the prior authorization of an SGD must be submitted with

the appropriate reimbursement codes.

(F) Trial use period

When recommended by the prescribing SLP, a trial use period must be conducted before the department will consider authorizing the purchase of an SGD. Monthly rental payments, limited to the lower of the provider's usual and customary monthly rental charge, are not to exceed ten per cent of the authorized purchase price of the prescribed SGD, and will be paid during the trial use period. Payments authorized during the trial use period are limited to four monthly payments. Long-term rental may be considered for authorization up to a maximum of ten months. If long-term rental is required, documentation must support why a long-term rental is necessary as an alternative to a trial period and/or purchase. Rental payments require prior authorization in accordance with paragraph (E) of this rule. Authorization for rental of SGDs for a trial use period or long-term rental will be limited to one device per month per consumer.

(G) Requesting purchase of an SGD at the end of a trial use period or subsequent to any rental period.

The following documentation must be submitted for review by PA before reimbursement for an SGD following a trial use period or subsequent to any rental period:

(1) A fully completed and legible JFS 02925 "Certificate of Medical Necessity/Prescription Speech Generating Device (SGD) Recertification" (appendix B to this rule).

(2) Documentation for the prior authorization of an SGD must be submitted with the appropriate reimbursement codes.

(3) Documentation that details any previous rental payments received by the SGD provider made on behalf of the consumer by the department in relation to providing the consumer with an SGD device.

(4) Any other documentation required or requested by the department.

(H) Repair, upgrade and replacement

(1) Repair

Medicaid reimbursement for repairs is available for no more than one SGD per recipient as detailed in rule 5101:3-10-08 of the Administrative Code. Repair costs for an SGD not originally covered by the department are to be considered on a case-by-case basis and are approved with a prior authorization. Repairs to consumer-owned SGD equipment that meet or exceed one thousand dollars in a twelve-month period will be deemed to

extend the useful life of the consumer-owned SGD by one year from the date of the last repair request. No follow-up requests for a new SGD device in association or in conjunction with a repair request will be considered for a consumer during this extension period.

The repair of an SGD (including battery pack replacement) requires prior authorization. The following documentation, including the appropriate reimbursement codes, must be submitted when requesting prior authorization:

(a) A fully completed and legible JFS 02926 "Certificate of Medical Necessity/Prescription Speech Generating Device (SGD)" (appendix C to this rule); and

(b) Any other documentation required or requested by the department.

Requests for minor repairs as defined in rule 5101:3-10-08 of the Administrative Code do not require prior authorization. However, the SGD provider must maintain the documentation detailed in this rule in the consumer's medical record in order to document the need for the repair.

(2) Replacement or modification of a consumer-owned SGD that was originally covered by the department will be authorized only if it is determined by the department that the current SGD does not meet the recipient's basic communication needs in accordance with this rule, regardless of the age of the current equipment, and the current SGD cannot be repaired or modified to meet basic communication needs due to situations such as a change in a consumer's cognitive, communication or physical status. If the current SGD can be modified or repaired, replacement will only be considered when modification or repair of the current equipment is judged by the department to be more costly than replacement. A request for prior authorization for replacement or modification of a recipient-owned SGD must meet all the requirements specified in paragraphs (H)(1)(a) and (H)(1)(b) of this rule. In addition, a description, model number, and the condition of a recipient's current equipment must be specified on the documentation submitted for prior authorization of additional or replacement equipment. (See rule 5101:3-10-05 of the Administrative Code regarding duplicate and conflicting equipment.)

(I) Reimbursement

(1) SGDs are reimbursed according to the department fee schedule contained in appendix DD to rule 5101:3-1-60 of the Administrative Code, or the provider's usual and customary charge, whichever is less.

(2) Under no circumstances will the department pay more than the amount of the cumulative sum of ten rental payments for any SGD made to a provider by

the department on behalf of a medicaid consumer. Ownership of any SGD that has had ten rental payments made to the SGD provider by the department on behalf of a consumer immediately transfers to the consumer upon receipt of the tenth rental payment to the SGD provider by the department. The SGD provider is responsible to notify the consumer that the ownership of the SGD was transferred upon completion of the rental or trial agreement as explained in this rule.

(3) Any compensation paid to an SGD provider on a consumer's behalf in association with the dispensing, repair, replacement or modification of an SGD is inclusive of all professional, technical or administrative services required to supply the SGD to the consumer. These costs cannot be billed to the department separately.

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