

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution: 109
(A-24)

Introduced by: Association for Clinical Oncology, American Society for Radiation
Oncology

Subject: Coverage for Dental Services Medically Necessary for Cancer Care

Referred to: Reference Committee A

1 Whereas, dental services may be required prior to or after cancer treatment and such services
2 are an integral part of successful cancer treatment; and
3

4 Whereas, dental care is linked to improved outcomes in patients with cancer and improved
5 quality of life; and
6

7 Whereas, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently expanded coverage for
8 certain cancer treatment-related oral and dental conditions, as well as for pre-treatment exams;
9 and
10

11 Whereas, all patients, regardless of insurance coverage, deserve equal access to these
12 medically necessary treatments; therefore be it
13

14 RESOLVED, that our American Medical Association supports that oral examination and dental
15 services prior to and following the administration of radiation, chemotherapy, chimeric antigen
16 receptor (CAR) T-cell therapy and high-dose bone-modifying agents for the treatment of cancer
17 are part of medically necessary care (New HOD Policy); and be it further
18

19 RESOLVED, that our AMA will advocate that all insurers cover medically necessary oral
20 examination and dental services prior to the administration of and resulting as a complication of
21 radiation, chemotherapy and/or surgery for all cancer of the head and neck region. (Directive to
22 Take Action)
23

Fiscal Note: Modest - between \$1,000 - \$5,000

Received: 4/24/2024

REFERENCES

1. Haynes DA, Vanison CC, Gillespie MB. The impact of dental care in head and neck cancer outcomes: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Laryngoscope*. 2022 Jan;132(1):45-52. doi: 10.1002/lary.29494. Epub 2021 Feb 26. PMID: 33635587. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33635587/>
2. Thanvi J, Bumb D. Impact of dental considerations on the quality of life of oral cancer patients. *Indian J Med Paediatr Oncol*. 2014 Jan;35(1):66-70. doi: 10.4103/0971-5851.133724. PMID: 25006287; PMCID: PMC4080666. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4080666/>
3. Medicare and Medicaid Programs; CY 2024 Payment Policies Under the Physician Fee Schedule and Other Changes to Part B Payment and Coverage Policies; Medicare Shared Savings Program Requirements; Medicare Advantage; Medicare and Medicaid Provider and Supplier Enrollment Policies; and Basic Health Program, 88 FR 78818 (publication date November 16, 2023). <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/11/16/2023-24184/medicare-and-medicaid-programs-cy-2024-payment-policies-under-the-physician-fee-schedule-and-other>

RELEVANT AMA POLICY

Medicare Coverage for Dental Services H-330.872

Our AMA supports: (1) continued opportunities to work with the American Dental Association and other interested national organizations to improve access to dental care for Medicare beneficiaries; and (2) initiatives to expand health services research on the effectiveness of expanded dental coverage in improving health and preventing disease in the Medicare population, the optimal dental benefit plan designs to cost-effectively improve health and prevent disease in the Medicare population, and the impact of expanded dental coverage on health care costs and utilization.

Increasing Patient Access to Hearing, Dental and Vision Services D-185.972

Our AMA will: (1) promote awareness of hearing impairment as a potential contributor to the development of cognitive impairment or dementia in later life, to physicians as well as to the public; (2) promote, and encourage other stakeholders, including public, private, and professional organizations and relevant governmental agencies, to promote the conduct and acceleration of research into specific patterns and degrees of hearing loss to determine those most linked to cognitive impairment or dementia and amenable to correction; (3) work with interested national medical specialty societies and state medical associations to encourage and promote research into hearing loss as a contributor to cognitive impairment, and to increase patient access to hearing loss identification and remediation services; and (4) work with interested national medical specialty societies and state medical associations to encourage and promote research into vision and dental health and to increase patient access to vision and dental services.

Importance of Oral Health in Patient Care D-160.925

Our AMA: (1) recognizes the importance of (a) managing oral health and (b) access to dental care as a part of optimal patient care; and (2) will explore opportunities for collaboration with the American Dental Association on a comprehensive strategy for improving oral health care and education for clinicians.

Definitions of “Cosmetic” and “Reconstructive” Surgery H-475.992

(1) Our AMA supports the following definitions of "cosmetic" and "reconstructive" surgery: Cosmetic surgery is performed to reshape normal structures of the body in order to improve the patient's appearance and self-esteem. Reconstructive surgery is performed on abnormal structures of the body, including prosthodontic reconstruction (including dental implants) caused by congenital defects, developmental abnormalities, trauma, infection, tumors, or disease. It is generally performed to improve function, but may also be done to approximate a normal appearance. (2) Our AMA supports that reconstructive surgery be covered by all insurers and encourages third party payers to use these definitions in determining services eligible for coverage under the plans they offer or administer.