



Subject: Bone-Anchored Hearing Aid (BAHA)*

Effective Date: March 27, 2007

Department(s): Utilization Management

Policy: Bone-anchored hearing aids (BAHA) are reimbursable under the Plans administered by QualCare, Inc., according to the criteria listed below.

Objective: To assure proper and consistent reimbursement and to delineate criteria for coverage of a unique type of sound amplification device.

Procedure:

1. Reimbursement of BAHA (percutaneous with abutment or subcutaneous with magnetic coupling-**HCPCS V5040; CPT for placement 69710**) requires that the patient must be at least 5 years of age, have speech discrimination score of better than 60%, and meet at least one audiologic criterion and one medical criterion from the lists below:

A. Audiologic criteria:

(1) Moderate to severe bilateral symmetric conductive or mixed hearing loss (threshold >45 dB at 500, 1000, 2000, and 4000 Hz, with less than 15 dbHL difference at individual frequencies or < 10dB difference of pure tone average measured at frequencies of 500 Hz, 1000, 2000, and 3000 between ears)- for bilateral implants.

OR

(2) Unilateral conductive or mixed hearing loss with average bone conduction threshold >45 dB at 500, 1000, 2000, and 4000 Hz- for a unilateral implant.

AND

B. Medical criteria:

(1) Congenital or acquired malformations of the external ear canal and/or middle ear (e.g., atresia) **OR**

(2) Severe chronic otitis externa or otitis media **OR**

(3) Tumors of the external ear canal and/or tympanic cavity which would preclude the use of an air conduction hearing aid

OR

(4) Dermatitis of the external ear canal, including reactions from ear molds used for typical air conduction hearing aids

OR

(5) Hearing loss due to otosclerosis in individuals who cannot undergo stapedectomy **OR**

(6) Other anatomic or medical conditions in which an air conduction hearing aid is specifically contraindicated

2. Separate from the criteria above, BAHA is reimbursable in patients at least 5 years of age with single-sided sensorineural hearing loss with threshold 90 dB and speech discrimination score <20%.

3. Separate from the criteria above, a unilateral BAHA is reimbursable as an alternative to an air conduction contralateral routing of sound device (CROS) for individuals with single-

sided deafness (unilateral sensorineural hearing loss) and normal hearing in the other ear.

4. Replacement batteries (HCPCS-L8621, L8624) and external recharging system (HCPCS L8625) that are specifically designed to provide a power supply to a medically necessary BAHA are considered medically necessary.

NOTE: Off-the-shelf batteries are generally considered not medically necessary because they are not primarily medical in nature.

5. Repair or replacement of BAHA components is considered medically necessary when:

the currently used device is no longer functioning adequately, inadequate function of the item interferes with activities of daily living, and repair is expected to make the equipment fully functional(as defined by the manufacturer).

OR

replacement, when the currently used device is no longer functioning adequately and has been determined to be non-repairable.

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*Consistent with Summary Plan Description (SPD). When there is discordance between this policy and the SPD, the provisions of the SPD prevail.