



Subject: Medical Necessity – Definition*

Effective date: May 1, 2000

Department(s) Utilization Management

Policy: Medically necessary care is care which is necessary or appropriate to diagnose or treat a condition, illness, disease or injury based on currently accepted standards of medical practice and not primarily for the convenience of the member, family or provider. The service must be clinically appropriate in terms of type, frequency, extent, site and duration; and considered effective for the member's illness, injury or disease; and not more costly than an alternative service or sequence of services at least as likely to produce equivalent therapeutic or diagnostic results. The fact that a provider orders, recommends, or approves care, supplies or level of service does not automatically make these medically necessary.

Objective: To assure proper and consistent reimbursement and to define the concept that underlies determinations of Plan coverage throughout QualCare's group health products.

Procedure: Determination of medical necessity will be based on:

1. Plan-wide acknowledged criteria, including but not limited to InterQual® Criteria and MCG Health.
2. Approved Medical Policies when available.

3. If there are no approved medical policies, the Medical Director will utilize clinical expertise including, but not limited to the following:
 - a. Information furnished by the provider(s) of care
 - b. Discussions with the treating physician/other providers
 - c. Independent search of peer-reviewed medical literature and published clinical guidelines
 - d. Consultation with experts
 - e. Specialty society guidelines or recommendations
 - f. Review of information from appropriate government regulatory bodies

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*Consistent with Specific Plan Design (SPD); in the event of discordance between this policy and the SPD, the provisions of the SPD shall prevail.