

Effective 6/1/2021*, Providence Health Plan will institute the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS) National Coverage Determination (NCD) Coding Policy Manual of selected lab services [for commercial and individual plans](#).

Q: What is the CMS NCD coding policy manual?

A: The final rule, published in the Federal Register on November 23, 2001 (66 FR 58788), established the national coverage and administrative policies for clinical diagnostic laboratory services. It promoted Medicare program integrity and national uniformity, and simplified administrative requirements for clinical diagnostic services. A total of 23 lab NCDs for diagnostic lab testing services were established as part of this 2001 final rule.

For each of the 23 NCDs, the CMS NCD coding policy manual outlines ICD-10-CM codes that are medically necessary or do not support medical necessity. The coding policy manual also includes limitations to these lab testing services, such as frequency limits.

Q: What is a NCD for diagnostic laboratory testing?

A: A national coverage policy for diagnostic laboratory test(s) is a document stating CMS's policy with respect to the clinical circumstances in which the test(s) will be considered reasonable and necessary, and not screening, for Medicare purposes. Such a policy applies nationwide.

Q: How is Providence Health Plan implementing the NCDs for diagnostic laboratory testing and the CMS NCD coding policy manual?

A: Through medical policy, we will create new policies based on the NCDs for diagnostic laboratory testing and the CMS NCD coding policy manual. The CPT/HCPCS codes for the various lab testing services are configured to pay or deny (not medically necessary) based on the diagnosis codes outlined in the coding policy manual.

Q: What laboratory services will be affected by this change?

A: For commercial and individual lines of business, we will implement medical policies and coding configuration based on the CMS NCD coding policy manual for the following NCDs:

- Blood Counts (NCD 190.15)
- Glycated Hemoglobin/Glycated Protein (NCD 190.21)
- Thyroid Testing (NCD 190.22)
- Lipids Testing (NCD 190.23)

In the future, we plan to implement all 23 diagnostic laboratory testing NCDs for all lines of business. Provider notice will be provided 60 days in advance of each implementation.

Q: When will the new policies and coding configuration take effect?

A: 6/1/2021* for commercial and individual plans. On this date, the medical policies will be accessible here: <https://healthplans.providence.org/providers/provider-support/medical-policy-pharmacy-policy-and-provider-information/>

Q: Where can I access the NCDs for diagnostic laboratory testing and the CMS NCD coding policy manual?

A: The NCDs are linked below. Within every NCD there is a section titled “**Covered Code Lists**”. Under this section, you may download the most recent version of the CMS NCD coding policy manual.

- [Blood Counts \(NCD 190.15\)](#)
- [Glycated Hemoglobin/Glycated Protein \(NCD 190.21\)](#)
- [Thyroid Testing \(NCD 190.22\)](#)
- [Lipids Testing \(NCD 190.23\)](#)

*Effective date subject to change to later date. Will update provider alerts accordingly, if needed.