


<b>MEDICAL POLICY</b>	<b>Speech Generating Devices (SGDs) (Medicare Only)</b>
<b>Effective Date:</b> 3/1/2022   3/1/2022	Medical Policy Number: 519
	Medical Policy Committee Approved Date: 2/2022
Medical Officer	Date

**See Policy CPT/HCPCS CODE section below for any prior authorization requirements**

**SCOPE:**

Providence Health Plan, Providence Health Assurance, Providence Plan Partners, and Ayin Health Solutions as applicable (referred to individually as “Company” and collectively as “Companies”).

**APPLIES TO:**

Medicare Only

**MEDICARE POLICY CRITERIA**

The following Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Service (CMS) guidelines should be utilized for medical necessity coverage determinations. Click the link provided in the table below to access applicable medical necessity criteria. All listed guidelines apply.

Service	Medicare Guidelines
<i>Speech Generating Devices (SGD) – Initial Provision (E2500, E2502, E2504, E2506, E2508, E2510)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Coverage Determination (LCD) for Speech Generating Devices (<a href="#">L33739</a>)</li> <li>Local Coverage Article (LCA) for Speech Generating Devices – Policy Article (<a href="#">A52469</a>)</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE:</b> While there is a national coverage determination (NCD) for Speech Generating Devices (<a href="#">50.1</a>) available, it does not provide coverage criteria. Instead, it states coverage is left to Medicare Contractor (MAC) discretion. Therefore, the above LCD is the primary coverage reference.</p>
<i>Accessories and Software (E2511, E2512, E2599)</i>	<p>For <b>general coverage criteria:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LCD for Speech Generating Devices (<a href="#">L33739</a>)</li> </ul> <p>For <b>non-covered features/accessories/services:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LCA for Speech Generating Devices – Policy Article (<a href="#">A52469</a>)</li> </ul>

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<i>Replacement or Upgrades</i>	LCA for Speech Generating Devices – Policy Article ( <a href="#">A52469</a> )
<i>Duplicate Requests (Request for more than one SGD)</i>	LCD for Speech Generating Devices ( <a href="#">L33739</a> )

**POLICY GUIDELINES**

Speech generation is defined as audible generation of words or phrases and in addition, may include:

1. Communication via written text (i.e., email or text (SMS) messaging); or,
2. Communication via phone messaging.

In order to satisfy the Medicare durable medical equipment (DME) benefit requirements, the speech generating device (SGD) must meet **all** of the following requirements:

1. Can withstand repeated use; and,
2. Has an expected life of at least 3 years; and,
3. Is primarily and customarily used to serve a medical purpose; and,
4. Generally is not useful to an individual in the absence of an illness or injury; and,
5. Is appropriate for use in the home; and,
6. Be limited to use by a patient with a severe speech impairment; and,
7. Be primarily used for the purpose of generating speech.
  - a. A device utilizing tablet, smartphone or computer hardware must be designed by the manufacturer to function solely as a SGD, as defined above, at the time of initial issue.

The Medicare life expectancy requirement of at least three years is known as the minimum life requirement, or MLR. This is necessary in order for a device to meet the definition of the term “durable.” However, the MLR is not the same thing as “reasonable useful lifetime” (RUL). The RUL is used to determine how often a piece of equipment or a device is eligible for coverage of a replacement.

**BILLING GUIDELINES**

Effective June 1, 2016, the only products which may be billed using HCPCS code E2510 are those which have received a written coding verification by the Medicare Pricing, Data Analysis and Coding (PDAC) contractor and are listed on the [Product Classification List \(PCL\)](#) maintained on the PDAC website. If a product is billed using a HCPCS code that requires written coding verification review, but the product is not on the PCL for that particular HCPCS code, that claim line will be denied as incorrect coding. (LCA A52469)

Desktop, laptop, tablet, smartphone and other hand-held computers (i.e., general computing devices) are not considered DME because they do not meet criteria 3, 4, 6 and 7 above (see *Policy Guidelines*),

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even though they may serve a medical purpose. Only the speech generating software (HCPCS code E2511) may be eligible for coverage when installed on a general computing device, but the device itself must be coded A9270.

HCPCS code A4601 describes any lithium ion rechargeable battery used with an SGD or related accessory.

Codes E2500, E2502, E2504, E2506, E2508 and E2510 include all applicable speech generating software programs (whether they are on the device when shipped by the manufacturer or added by the supplier prior to delivery), batteries, battery chargers and AC adapters. These items may not be billed separately.

### CPT/HCPCS CODES

Medicare Only	
No Prior Authorization Required	
A4601	Lithium ion battery, rechargeable, for non-prosthetic use, replacement
E2500	Speech generating device, digitized speech, using pre-recorded messages, less than or equal to 8 minutes recording time
E2502	Speech generating device, digitized speech, using pre-recorded messages, greater than 8 minutes but less than or equal to 20 minutes recording time
E2504	Speech generating device, digitized speech, using pre-recorded messages, greater than 20 minutes but less than or equal to 40 minutes recording time
E2506	Speech generating device, digitized speech, using pre-recorded messages, greater than 40 minutes recording time
E2508	Speech generating device, synthesized speech, requiring message formulation by spelling and access by physical contact with the device
E2510	Speech generating device, synthesized speech, permitting multiple methods of message formulation and multiple methods of device access
E2511	Speech generating software program, for personal computer or personal digital assistant
E2512	Accessory for speech generating device, mounting system
Not Covered	
A9720	Non-covered item or service
Unlisted Codes	
All unlisted codes will be reviewed for medical necessity, correct coding, and pricing at the claim level. If an unlisted code is billed related to services addressed in this policy then <b>prior-authorization is required.</b>	
E2599	Accessory for speech generating device, not otherwise classified

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

Company Medical Policies serve as guidance for the administration of plan benefits. Medical policies do not constitute medical advice nor a guarantee of coverage. Company Medical Policies are reviewed annually and are based upon published, peer-reviewed scientific evidence and evidence-based clinical practice guidelines that are available as of the last policy update. The Companies reserve the right to determine the application of Medical Policies and make revisions to Medical Policies at any time. Providers will be given at least 60-days notice of policy changes that are restrictive in nature.

The scope and availability of all plan benefits are determined in accordance with the applicable coverage agreement. Any conflict or variance between the terms of the coverage agreement and Company Medical Policy will be resolved in favor of the coverage agreement.

## REGULATORY STATUS

### Mental Health Parity Statement

Coverage decisions are made on the basis of individualized determinations of medical necessity and the experimental or investigational character of the treatment in the individual case. In cases where medical necessity is not established by policy for specific treatment modalities, evidence not previously considered regarding the efficacy of the modality that is presented shall be given consideration to determine if the policy represents current standards of care.

## REFERENCES

1. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Local Coverage Determination (LCD): Speech Generating Devices (SGD) (L33739). <https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/details/lcd-details.aspx?LCDId=33739>. Published 2020. Accessed 12/10/2020.
2. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Local Coverage Article: Speech Generating Devices (SGD) - Policy Article (A52469). <https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/details/article-details.aspx?articleId=52469>. Published 2015. Accessed 12/10/2020.
3. Medicare Claims Processing Manual, Chapter 20 - Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics, and Supplies (DMEPOS), §90 - Payment for Additional Expenses for Deluxe Features; Available at: <https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-andGuidance/Guidance/Manuals/Downloads/clm104c20.pdf>