

In the News

Revised Process for Physician Discussions in Cases of Adverse Clinical Determination

Medical Mutual has revised its Physician Discussion in cases of adverse clinical determination effective August 15, 2018. This process change affects commercial plans only; there is no Medicare Advantage impact. The purpose of a Physician Discussion following a denial is to engage one of Medical Mutual's physician reviewers and the member's treating physician in a meaningful clinical discussion. The desired outcome is the open dialogue promotes the overall health of our member and enhances his/her coordination of care.

Please note the following changes to our process:

1. Medical Mutual will only accept a Physician Discussion from an attending (treating) physician, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant who is actively providing care to our member whose service request was denied within 14 calendar days of the denial. **Claim appeals and services already performed will not be eligible for Physician Discussion.**
2. **Physician Discussions must continue to be scheduled in advance.** Upon receipt of an adverse clinical determination, providers can call one of our Physician Discussion lines to schedule a call between the treating physician and a Medical Mutual physician reviewer based on the availability of both parties. Scheduling this appointment will continue to allow our physician reviewers time to review and understand the issue before the discussion.
 - Medical/Surgical: 1-800-338-4114
 - Behavioral Health: 1-800-258-3186
 - Medical Drug Management: 1-866-620-4027
3. On the day of the scheduled call, the attending physician should continue to call the Physician Discussion line as arranged. He or she will then be transferred to the physician reviewer to discuss the case. Any calls initiated after the assigned time has passed and beyond a five-minute grace period will be rescheduled. We will continue to allow one rescheduling attempt per case denial.
4. Medical Mutual will continue to accept one Physician Discussion per adverse clinical determination. If the issue is not resolved at the end of the Discussion, a formal appeal is the next step.

Why has Medical Mutual Revised this process?

1. Medical Mutual has revised the timeline of scheduling Physician Discussions to ensure earlier dialogue, closer to the original date of service with physician reviewers as a means of improving member outcomes.
2. Changing the timeline of our Physician Discussions will also improve efficiency in processing claims.
3. Changing the timeline of our Physician Discussions aligns this process with Medical Mutual's other care areas and the care continuum.

Physician Discussions are not:

- A replacement for providing documentation that should have been submitted with the initial clinical review.
- A replacement for a formal appeal. Physician Discussions are not required before requesting an appeal.