

Medical Coverage Policy



**Blue Cross
Blue Shield**
of Rhode Island

Smoking Cessation Mandate

Device/Equipment Drug Medical Surgery Test Other

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| Effective Date: | 1/1/2007 | Policy Last Updated: | 3/1/2011 |
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Prospective review is recommended/required. Please check the member agreement for preauthorization guidelines.

Prospective review is not required.

NOTE:

As of 01/01/2010, limits have been removed on the number of treatment courses and counseling sessions for smoking cessation treatments. For more information regarding the new changes see SPECIAL NOTE: The Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner (OHIC) below.

Description:

This is an administrative policy to document Rhode Island General Laws **(RIGL) 27-20-53¹** Tobacco cessation programs. This law, enacted January 1, 2007, mandates coverage for nicotine replacement therapy and smoking cessation counseling treatment as stated below:

2010 Amended Tobacco cessation program

(1) Every individual or group health insurance contract, plan or policy delivered, issued for delivery or renewed in this state on or after January 1, 2010, which provides medical coverage that includes coverage for physician services in a physician's office, and every policy which provides major medical or similar comprehensive-type coverage, shall include coverage for smoking cessation treatment, provided that if such medical coverage does not include prescription drug coverage, such contract, plan or policy shall not be required to include coverage for FDA approved smoking cessation medications.

(2) As used in this section, smoking cessation treatment includes the use of an over-the-counter (OTC) or prescription US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved smoking cessation medication when used in accordance with FDA approval, for not more than two (2) courses of medication for up to fourteen (14) weeks each, annually, when recommended and prescribed by a prescriber who holds prescriptive privileges in the state in which they are licensed, and used in combination with an annual outpatient benefit of sixteen (16) one-half (1/2) hour evidence-based smoking cessation counseling sessions provided by a qualified practitioner for each covered individual. Smoking cessation treatment may be redefined through regulation promulgated by the health insurance commissioner, in accordance with the most

current clinical practice guidelines sponsored by the United States department of health and human services or its component agencies. (See **Special Note** below regarding limits.)

(3) Health insurance contracts, plans, or policies to which this section applies, may impose copayments and/or deductibles for the benefits mandated by this section consistent with the contracts', plans' or policies' copayments and/or deductibles for physician services and medications. Nothing contained in this section shall impact the reimbursement, medical necessity or utilization review, managed care, or case management practices of these health insurance contracts, plans or policies.

(4) This section shall not apply to insurance coverage providing benefits for:

- (a) hospital confinement indemnity;*
- (b) disability income;*
- (c) accident only;*
- (d) long-term care;*
- (e) Medicare supplement;*
- (f) limited benefit health;*
- (g) specified disease indemnity;*
- (h) sickness or bodily injury or death by accident or both; and*
- (i) other limited benefit policies.*

SPECIAL NOTE: The Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner (OHIC)

OHIC redefined, through Regulation 14 - Tobacco Cessation Treatment Coverage, the smoking cessation treatment in regards to RIGL 27-20-53² to be consistent with the current clinical practice guidelines sponsored by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, "Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence: A Clinical Guideline." Consequently, **the limits previously placed on the number of treatment courses and counseling sessions have been removed.**

Smoking cessation treatments include:

- Nicotine replacement therapy, that include the patch, gum, lozenges, and inhalers, and bupropion HCL, can assist by decreasing cravings for nicotine and reducing signs and symptoms of withdrawal.
- Varenicline (Chantix™) is a smoking cessation medication which helps reduce withdrawal symptoms and cravings caused by the loss of nicotine from cigarettes. In addition, it works by blocking the pleasant effects of nicotine (from smoking) in the brain.

Medical Criteria:

Not applicable.

Policy:

Smoking cessation treatment is covered for all product lines.

Coverage:

Benefits may vary between groups and contracts. Please refer to the appropriate evidence of coverage, or Subscriber Agreement contract for the applicable "Smoking Cessation Programs" and pharmacy benefit coverage.

Rhode Island mandated benefits do not apply to Plan 65, FEHBP, Medicare Advantage, and RIte Care plans. Smoking cessation services are covered for BlueCHiP for Medicare members.

Self-funded groups may or may not choose to follow state mandate(s).

A written prescription from a physician **is required** for all smoking cessation medications, including over-the-counter nicotine replacement products (e.g., nicotine patch, gum, lozenges).

Smoking cessation coverage includes the following:**Nicotine Replacement Products:**

- Members are encouraged to contact Customer Service to verify approved nicotine replacement prescription products.
- Nicotine replacement therapy and smoking cessation prescription drugs are not covered when purchased at a mail order pharmacy.

Counseling Services:

- Counseling services may be provided by a physician, Nurse Practitioner, Nurse Midwife, Physician Assistant, as well as a mental health and chemical dependency provider. Counseling services may be provided at a hospital facility.

Coding and reimbursement:

Please see the **Preventive Services** policy for coverage information for smoking cessation counseling under the Federal Healthcare Reform: Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act Preventive Health Services.

The following code is covered:
99407

Providers should file 99407 and not G0437 for this service.

G0437 Smoking and tobacco cessation counseling visit for the asymptomatic patient; intensive, greater than 10 minutes

The following codes are not separately reimbursed:

99406

G0436 Smoking and tobacco cessation counseling visit for the asymptomatic patient; intermediate, greater than 3 minutes, up to 10 minutes

Also known as:

N/A

Published:

Policy Update, December 2006

Policy Update, December 2007

Provider Update, February 2009

Provider Update, January 2010

Provider Update, May 2011

1. Rhode Island General Laws 27-20-53. Tobacco cessation programs.

<http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText09/HouseText09/H5823B.pdf>

2. Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner (OHIC). Amendment of Regulation 14 Tobacco Cessation Treatment Coverage. November 23, 2009.

<http://www.ohic.ri.gov/Regulation14Tobacco.php>

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